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FRANK LESLIE'S

BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

An Illustrated Journal of Amusement, Adventure, and Instruction.

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Minnie's Rescue from the Wilds of Siberia; Or, The Daring Adventures of Two Boys.

By ROGER STARBUCK.

CHAPTER III.

(Continued from page 360.)

As Peter opened the door for his cousin and the two boys to pass out, the Russian officer, Kickavitch, advanced.

"One moment, if you will excuse me," he said, bowing to Minnie. "I would like to speak to these young gentlemen before they go."

The boys paused and turned toward him.

"I believe you stated that your vessel entered the harbor a few hours ago?" said Kickavitch.

"So I said," answered Brian.

"Well, sir, I am sorry to say that you paid no attention to our rules—that you ran in past the fort, and that when a boat put off toward your craft, instead of lying to and waiting for it to come aboard, you struck it with your bow and sank it."

"Who told you this?" said Brian.

"The Cossack who just entered, and who is from the fort."

"It was an accident," said Brian. "My helmsman kept off instead of luffing up, which was the cause of the boat's being run down."

"That's what I have thought," said Kickavitch; "but I regret to say that the matter will have to be looked into. I will be obliged to board your craft to-night."

"You shall be welcome," said Brian, bowing. "If you will wait until I come back after going down-stairs with this young lady you can go aboard with me."

"Thank you!" said Kickavitch. "I regret that I am obliged to trouble you. I will wait for you, and we will go aboard together, as you propose."

"Very well," said Brian.

Accompanied by Peter, the two friends now followed Minnie to the room below.

The young girl pointed out the picture, and Brian and his companion stood under it, looking up as if admiring it.

Meanwhile Peter kept so close to the trio that there was no chance for Will to explain to Brian the manner in which he had agreed with Minnie to get her away from the premises.

In this dilemma the youth, with his usual decision, hit upon the only plan he could think of to rid himself of the detestable spy.

Springing suddenly upon him, he tripped him up, at the same time clapping a hand over his mouth to stifle his cries.

Peter, however, was not to be so easily mastered, for he was both stout and resolute.

For a moment he lay as if overcome with fear, thus deceiving his opponent, who slightly relaxed his hold, while he requested Brian to stuff something for a gag in the mouth of the young Russian. Brian, looking around him, saw an old pelisse, and seizing it, he was advancing with it, when, by a sudden movement, Peter hurled Will over sideways, and, planting both knees on his stomach so that he could not rise, he pulled a pistol from his pocket and presented it at Brian.

"Stand where you are, and make no attempt to leave the room, or you are a dead man! You have not deceived me. I suspected you from the first, and now my suspicions are verified!"

"Run, Brian, run! with your sister, and leave me to my fate!" cried Will, as he vainly struggled to rise.

"Let him try it at his peril!" said Peter, still holding his weapon pointed at the young sailor. "Ho, there! ho!" he shouted, in a loud voice, to bring those above to his assistance.

By a desperate effort Will at that moment contrived to half raise himself and snatch the pistol from the grasp of the young Russian.

As the latter strove to recover it he dealt him on the temple, with the butt of the weapon, a blow which laid him senseless on the floor.

The sound of voices above and of the door opening, betokened that the persons there had heard Peter's voice and were about to descend the stairs to see what was the the matter.

"Come, Brian," said Will, as he sprang to his feet, "there is not a moment to lose. Miss Lewis understands — I have explained all to her," he added, as Brian hesitated, looking at his sister.

"Dear brother!" said Minnie, throwing herself into his arms.

The present, however, was no time for endearments.

The young girl quickly disengaged herself from her brother. He seized her round the waist, lifted her as if she were a child, and was making toward the front door when she spoke.

"No, no, not that way! There is where they will first look. There is another way at the back, which opens into the garden. There is a wall there with a gate in it."

Brian, releasing his sister, that she might show him the way, followed her.

They were soon in the garden, where Minnie found the satchel she had thrown out of the window.

"I will carry it for you," said Will.

He took it from her and they hurried on.

Minnie opened the gate in the wall,

"'YOU GO THROUGH FIRST, MINNIE,' SAID BRIAN, 'AND WE WILL FOLLOW.' THE YOUNG GIRL CRAWLED THROUGH."

SIX SPLENDID STORIES IN THIS PAPER.

As they emerged from the garden they heard the noise of quick footsteps and loud voices coming from the front of the house.

"There they are! They are looking for us!" cried Minnie.

"I hear some person drawing his sword. It must be the valiant Kickavitch!" said Will.

"Which way shall we go now?" remarked Brian, looking around him, much puzzled. "I must own that I don't think I could find my way back to the river."

"Follow me," said Minnie; "I will guide you."

The two boys followed the young girl, who led them along a broad street which sloped a little from the height.

They had not proceeded far, however, when to their dismay they heard footsteps not only behind them in pursuit, but also in their front!

"It is the Cossack coming with a party which Captain Kickavitch must have sent him for to arrest you both," said Minnie. "That affair of the boat aroused his suspicions."

The approaching footsteps sounded every moment nearer.

Soon the boys could distinguish the outline of many forms ahead.

Both Will and Brian drew their swords.

"No, no," cried Minnie, anxiously; "do not attempt to fight them. There are too many. Perhaps we can hide until they pass us."

She led the way amongst the ruins of an old church, some yards back from the street.

Here they found a brick vault in which they ensconced themselves.

They were not there long when they heard the Cossack's party passing in the street.

A moment later this party met that from the house, and the loud, quick voices of all, above which rose the shrill tones of Peter and the authoritative orders of Kickavitch were heard.

"They are nearly opposite to us," said Will.

Brian emerged from the vault and advanced to one of the broken windows of the church.

"They are coming this way," he said, returning a minute later.

"Had we not better leave the place and go on toward the river?" said Will.

"No, they would see you," said Minnie. "Those Co-sacks have sharp eyes."

"And if we stay here they will find us," said Brian.

"I am not so sure of that," said Minnie. "I don't think we have been seen as yet, and they will not care to lose time by looking here long."

The searching party soon entered the church.

They looked about them hurriedly.

Then Kickavitch said something in Russian.

"What does he say?" whispered Brian to Minnie.

"That there is no use of looking longer here. Hark!"

Peter's voice was now heard.

"He proposes that they search this vault before they go," whispered the young girl, trembling.

"Confound that Peter!" muttered Brian. "It seems as if he is bound to spoil all our plans."

Kickavitch, accompanied by Peter, approached the vault.

The outlines of their persons could just be distinguished in the dim light.

Brian and his friend grasped their swords tightly.

"This way," whispered Minnie.

She moved to the back part of the vault.

"There is a small opening," she said; "but I do not think it is large enough for us to crawl through."

Brian and Will looked around that opening with the points of their swords, and some of the loose bricks gave way.

"We will soon make it large enough," said Will.

Now, however, the pursuers entered the vault.

They groped about without seeing the fugitives, who were in deep shadow.

"We have not looked in the back part of the vault yet," said the indefatigable Peter, in Russian, which the young girl at once translated to her brother in a whisper.

Will continued to poke at the bricks, catching each one in his hand as it fell, so that it might not make a noise by dropping.

"The opening is large enough now," he whispered to his companions.

"You go through first, Minnie," said Brian, "and we will follow."

The young girl crawled through.

The others were about to follow, when they saw Kickavitch and Peter, by whom they were now evidently discovered, rushing toward them.

"Surrender!" roared Kickavitch, dashing at the two boys, sword in hand.

Will, who had put himself on the defensive, with one blow of his weapon dashed the Russian's sword from his grasp.

Peter, who was also provided with a sword, aimed a sweeping blow at Brian, who, however, warded it off with his cutlass.

At this moment Peter's foot struck against a clump of loose bricks lying in a heap on the ground, and down he went, falling flat on his stomach.

Meanwhile Kickavitch had drawn a pistol, and, on aiming it at Will, he was about to discharge it, when Brian, with one blow of his cutlass, knocked it from his grasp.

Peter, in the darkness, mistaking Kickavitch for Will, rose and threw himself upon him with great fury.

The two boys, taking advantage of the mistake, crawled through the opening, and with Minnie were about to make off, when Will felt his coat tightly grasped from behind.

It was Peter who thus held on to him.

He had soon discovered his error, and seeing Will, who was the last to pass through the opening, crawling out, he had made a rush for the hole, which, however, he reached too late to seize the youth.

He endeavored to force himself through, but so stout were his proportions that he stuck fast in the aperture, whence he vainly endeavored to extricate himself.

The confused Kickavitch, the moment Peter let go of his throat, which he had been tightly squeezing, supposing that he was either Brian or Will, now making out a dim form struggling in the opening, seized it by the legs, shouting out to his men to come and help him.

"I've got you at last, you rascal!" he added. "No use of your kicking and squirming; you can not get away from me! Be quiet, or I will cut your legs off."

And with the point of his sword, which he had picked up, Kickavitch pricked Peter in a certain prominent portion of his person.

Young Lotski howled with rage and pain, while he valiantly endeavored to make the officer understand that he had hold of the wrong person.

There he was, fast in the opening, swearing and kicking in a vain effort to disengage himself, while every now and then Kickavitch gave a violent tug at his legs.

In fact, the voice of the Russian, who shouted alternately for his men and fiercely addressed the loud-tongued personage whom he had seized, drowned that of Peter, or at least prevented his recognizing his tones.

As stated, Peter had succeeded in grasping Will's coat.

A violent blow on the wrist, however, caused him to release his hold, and the two boys now kept on toward the river, guided by Minnie.

In a short time they found themselves by the river shore.

"Where is our boat?" said Will.

"We must have got below the spot where it was," answered Brian.

"It is probably up this way, then," said Minnie, as she conducted the two boys along the shore of the river.

"Who comes there?" roared Thompson, the Welshman, as they advanced.

"All right," answered Brian.

As he spoke the shouts of some of the pursuers, who had come off in this direction, were heard.

A group was seen through the darkness not twenty yards off.

Then there was a flash, a sharp report, and several bullets passed over the heads of Brian's men.

But the young captain could prevent them, some of the boat's party returned the fire.

"Give it to them! Charge on them!" came the voice of Kickavitch, in the distance.

As the pursuers were in the minority, however, the captain was not obeyed.

Will assisted Minnie into the boat, the men were all in their places, and away went the light craft.

The boat was soon alongside of the schooner, and again Will had the pleasure of assisting Minnie.

He helped her aboard the vessel, on reaching the deck of which she was conducted by Brian into the cabin.

The young captain had given orders for getting under way at once.

The anchor was soon up, and away went the schooner, heading toward the mouth of the river.

In the cabin brother and sister could now converse without restraint.

They embraced, and expressed their deep joy at meeting, and at their thus far successful escape.

"It is just like my own brave brother to come away up here to rescue me," said the young girl, as she laid a hand on his arm.

"I got your letter," said Brian, "and the moment I read it I made up my mind to get you away from Lotski."

"And I think you have succeeded," said Minnie.

"Yes; if we can only pass the fort. I have no doubt the rest will be easy. That rascally Lotski treated you harshly while you were with him, did he not?"

"Yes, at times he was very cruel. He would even swear at me and threaten to strike. He was angry because I constantly opposed his wishes with regard to Peter. Only last week he kept me locked up in my room for three days."

"You must have suffered much since we were separated," said Brian. "I often thought of you and wanted to see you; but, as you were not allowed to write to me, I did not know where to go."

At this moment the voice of the lookout man was heard. It was followed by that of Will.

"Come on deck, Brian. There's a light ahead and we cannot exactly make out what kind of a craft it comes from."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHASE.

MINNIE turned pale and looked up anxiously at her brother.

"Don't be afraid, Minnie," said Brian, kissing her. "If it proves to be an enemy I can run the gauntlet, I feel pretty sure."

"I cannot imagine what craft it can be," said the young girl. "If it is a larger one than yours, pray do not attempt to fight it."

"There are no Russian war vessels in this port?"

"No; there was on armed schooner here last week, but it sailed three days ago on a cruise."

"Hah!" said Brian.

He compressed his lips and seemed to muse for a few moments.

"I may have a hard time in leaving this sea, now that the enemy's cruisers are about," he said; "but this vessel, no matter what may happen, shall never become a Russian's prize."

The young captain now went on deck.

The light which had been seen was about a mile ahead.

As it was still dark, however, the vessel from which it shone could not be distinguished.

"What do you think of it, Mr. Bend?" said Brian to his mate.

"I don't know what to think. Whatever she is, she is coming this way, and we will scarcely have time to clear the sand-bar, even if we succeed in passing the fort, before she will be upon us."

"Fortunately, we show no light on deck. She cannot see us from where she is now."

"No, sir, but the nights are so confoundedly short that it will be daylight before we pass the bar, and then she will be sure to see us."

"We have everything we can carry?"

"Yes, sir; there is no room for an inch more of canvas. The wind has changed, too, and we have a good breeze for going out."

"So far, good; and now let us turn our attention to the fort."

"We are nearly under it. I don't think they can do us much damage in the dark."

"I am not so sure of that. Dark as it is they can see our outline through the gloom."

Scarcely had the youth spoken when a broad, bright flash lighted the hill above them, and the thundering report of one of the guns from the fort was heard. But it had been fired too soon.

The shot from it passed to windward of the schooner, striking the water about four ships' lengths off.

"We are in for it now," said Bend.

"Let her bang away," said Thompson; "she can't hurt us where we are."

"No," said Will, "but that flash, which lighted up both the hill and the river, showed them where we are, and also probably revealed us to the craft in the distance."

"She may be a friend," said Bend.

"I doubt it," answered Brian. "Are all hands on deck?"

"Yes, sir," replied Bend. "I thought it best to have them all up."

Brian walked forward to where the men, whispering or conversing in low tones, stood gathered in a dark mass.

"Men!" said the young captain, "I have a few words to say to you."

As he spoke another gun roared from the fort, and the shot, better aimed this time, passed slantingly downward, within a few feet of Brian, and just grazing the lee-rail, pinnped into the water alongside.

Some of the men started, but Brian never moved from the first, continuing his speech as if nothing had happened.

"We are placed in a peculiar situation, but I hope by good management to get out of it. We have the fort on one hand, and possibly an enemy's cruiser on the other. I hope every man will do his duty."

"We will! we will!" was the simultaneous response.

"I believe you, for you have already been tried, and have behaved well. Bear in mind that we now have a young lady—my sister—aboard the craft."

"Ay, ay, sir! ay, ay!" was the response on all sides.

"It is well! When the worst comes let every man stand firm and do his best."

With these words Brian turned on his heel and rejoined his officers.

The guns now began rapid play from the parapet of the fort.

Flash after flash and roar after roar.

The hills and the sea near the shore were at times lighted up so that the hull and masts of the little schooner were distinctly visible.

One shot made a hole in the mainsail, another took a chip off the flying jibboom, and a third went crashing through the bottom of the small boat hanging over the stern.

All at once, out at sea, a number of blue lights were seen to ascend from the decks of the approaching vessel.

These were answered from the fort, during which there was a brief respite in the firing.

"They understand each other's signals," said Brian; "that craft is an enemy."

"They cannot fire upon us, at any rate," said Will, "until we get out of range of the town."

"No; and for that reason I shall head straight on as I'm going," said Brian.

The parapets of the fort now seemed a sheet of lurid fire.

Shot after shot flew humming and whizzing about the *Swallow*, but as yet she had sustained no damage.

On she went, with the white water, tinted by the glare of the guns, flying about her bows.

At last Brian perceived that he had passed the edge of the sandbar.

Meanwhile, the approaching vessel was now not a quarter of a mile distant, and the gunners on the fort were obliged to stop firing for the present, lest they should hit the Russian.

Taking advantage of this, Brian kept straight on until, through the gloom, which was now beginning to vanish before the light of dawn, he could see the hull and masts of the enemy quite plainly.

"Zounds!" cried Thompson. "I thought so. It is the *Diana*."

"Ay, it is she, sure enough," said Brian. "But she cannot fire on us now that we have passed the bar. A pull on the weather-braces, Mr. Bend."

This order having been promptly obeyed, the schooner, luffing up a little, went buzzing along on a course at right angles with the town.

The Russian trimmed his craft to keep along on a parallel course, but he was still afraid to fire lest some of his shot should harm the town.

His craft was a swift one, and as it carried a heavier press of canvas than the *Swallow*, it kept gaining.

"They will head us off," said Bend.

"I do not mean to give them the chance," said Brian.

"How can you hinder it, sir?"

"You shall see," replied Brian. "Clear away the starboard 'midship gun there!" he added, turning to his men.

This was done.

Brian advanced to his gunner—a middle-aged sailor, who had served as captain of a gun aboard a man-of-war.

He was a stout, grizzly-looking seaman, named Dick Bowles, a brown, weather-beaten skin and arms like a blacksmith's.

"Of course you see that fellow, Dick?"

"Ay, ay, sir. I see the devil only too well."

"You also perceive that he does not fire at us, simply because he is afraid of hurting the town?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, we are not so situated. We can fire at him, although he cannot fire at us."

"Ay, ay, sir, and it's good it's so."

"There can be no question about that. I want to cripple him, and if you'll take off some of his canvas, you'll do me a favor and save your country at the same time."

"I'll do my best, sir. Here, lads, here!" he added, addressing some of his shipmates; "just help me above this gun out a bit more."

The assistance was promptly rendered.

Dick squinted along the piece carefully as he adjusted it, and then pulled the lark-string.

A stream of lurid fire was spurted from the little piece, the whizzing of the shot was heard, and the next moment the Russian's fore top-gallant was seen to gracefully incline and then slowly topple over, falling into the sea.

"How d'ye like that, sir?" said Dick, turning to Brian.

"A capital shot," said the youth. "A few more like it will enable us to leave the fellow astern."

"He is heading off a little, sir," said Dick. "He is too close to the land for a vessel of his draught. Blast me, sir, but I'd just like to see him go ashore!"

As he spoke Dick reloaded the piece.

"If he keeps on as he's going, he'll soon be out of range, sir," he remarked. "These little pepper-boxes don't carry far."

Brian ordered the man at the wheel to keep off a little.

This brought the head of the schooner more toward the Russian.

"It almost looks as if he was running away from us," said Bend.

"He is getting into deeper water," said Brian. "He wants to get us further out at sea in order that he can come down for us and use his guns against us."

"Why do you head up for him, sir?" said Bend, looking a little surprised.

"In order to cripple him. If we can once cripple him we can escape."

The report of the gun was now heard, but no damage was done to the Russian.

Dick rolled his quid furiously in his disappointment.

"Had it been a Frencher, I'd have hit him," he said.

"How do you make that out?" inquired Brian.

"Well, sir, them Frenchers, d'ye see, always attracts our shot some way or t'other. I don't know how it is, but I've seed it, sir, again and again."

"You must not forget that the French are with us in this war," said Brian.

"It's all right, sir; I'll give the 'Crapeaus' their due, and say they're good fighters, for so they be. We couldn't have better help."

By this time Dick had again loaded and sighted the gun.

As the roar of the piece was heard and the smoke lifted, the Russian's main topsail was seen to go down by the run.

"What d'ye think of that, sir?" inquired Dick, with quiet satisfaction.

"An excellent shot," answered Brian; "and now, Dick, if you can also bring down their foretopsail, I think we will have the chance to show them a clean pair of heels."

Again Dick sighted the gun and fired.

But not until he had fired six shots did he succeed in doing any damage to the enemy. Then he contrived to knock the topsail yard of the Russian to splinters.

It was high time for Brian to head away from his enemy.

Her guns were seen swarming nimbly aloft to repair damages, and as she was now a little out of range of the fort, the latter again commenced to roar and spit fire at the schooner.

Whizzing and howling, shot after shot flew past the schooner, some of them missing her only by a few inches.

Brian defiantly hoisted his colors, and kept on heading on a course nearly parallel with the shore.

All at once, out at sea, a number of blue lights were seen to ascend from the decks of the approaching vessel.

These were answered from the fort, during which there was a brief respite in the firing.

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"What sort of a man is he?"

"He is a young man of twenty-one—Captain Vosk."

"Is he a good fighter?"

"Young as he is, he would fight to the very last," answered Minnie, with an enthusiasm which was scarcely agreeable to Will.

"And how do you know that?" inquired Brian, a little surprised.

"I—I—have had a chance to learn something of his character," replied Minnie.

"Upon my word I should like to try him," said Brian, his eyes glowing like a young lion's. "If that other craft was not coming up astern, I don't know as I should run from him, in spite of his six guns."

"Do not think of meeting him," said the young girl, laying a hand on her brother's arm.

She seemed much agitated, and there were tears in her eyes.

As if not caring to show her weakness, she turned, after this last speech to her brother, and hurried into the cabin.

Brian now gave orders to brace the yards. This being done, the little schooner, close hauled, shot along within a mile of the land.

The other schooner, being of heavier draught, could not stand in so close; there would be a full mile between her and the *Swallow*, as the latter passed her.

Brian hoped to pass without sustaining much damage.

His craft was a swift one, and besides he would now be screened by a light mist which hovered along shore.

Meanwhile, the Russian brig astern had gained so that her hull and sails were visible.

Soon signals passed between her and the Russian schooner, after which the latter commenced operations by throwing a shot at the *Swallow's* bows as she dashed on. This shot grazed the staysail boom.

When the *Swallow* was opposite the Russian craft, the latter wore round, and standing along on a course parallel with that of her enemy, banged away at her.

The shot flew thickly about the little schooner, but, owing to her being screened by the mist, they took no effect. The gunners were evidently puzzled to "fix" her exact position, as every part of her, except her foretopmast, was shrouded from view.

Meanwhile, they did not dare to run in any closer, from fear of the shallow water, which, however, was deep enough to float their enemy.

About a mile ahead of him Brian perceived that the mist had cleared.

The moment he should reach this position he would be fully exposed to the shots of the Russian.

This, however, he would have risked, but for the brig, which was now fast coming up.

In this dilemma he had hit upon a plan which he hoped would be successful.

Instead of keeping on, he suddenly wore round, and, in the misty shroud alongshore, headed in the opposite direction.

"Why, brother," said Minnie, who had again come on deck, "you are going to meet the other one—the brig!"

"So it would seem," answered Brian, smiling. "But you will notice that the mist is thick enough to hide me all along shore in that direction. Neither the people of the Russian schooner nor of the brig will know of this manœuvre until it is too late for them to thwart me."

"Then there is no prospect of engaging the schooner?" said the young girl, looking much relieved.

"Not at present."

"Perhaps you have friends aboard that vessel, Miss Lewis?" remarked Will.

Minnie blushed, and at once changed the subject.

Will turned away, feeling strangely uneasy. He asked himself why this was so, and could only account for it by the fact of his being more impressed by this young woman than he had ever before been by any of her sex.

She was surpassingly graceful and lovely.

Her voice had a tone which the boy liked.

The woman and the child so charmingly blended in her manner was to him very pleasant. Again he conversed with her, and as he did so he endeavored to cast from his mind the suspicion that had entered it.

This suspicion was that Minnie had a lover on board the Russian schooner, and that this lover was the schooner's commander, Captain Vosk.

"There she is, still banging away and still keeping on," said Will, half laughing. "That stupid Russian captain has no suspicion of our whereabouts—of our change of course."

Minnie looked up, and the boy fancied that her blue eyes flashed a little indignantly as she responded:

"How could he? The mist hides us."

"Yes, but I should have thought he would have heard the movement of our yards."

"We are too far off."

"At any rate," said Will, "I don't think I could have been so easily deceived."

The young girl smiled but said nothing.

She looked toward the craft ahead.

"Do you think we are in no danger from that vessel?" she inquired.

"I scarcely think so, as we are in the mist and will be when we pass her. She will have to keep at least a mile and a half outside of us, and we will be able to see her, although she will find it impossible to see us."

"But these mists are very capricious. Sometimes they lift suddenly."

"I hope it will not be so in our case."

The schooner, speeding along, was soon nearly opposite the brig.

The commander had four lookouts at his masthead, and was walking the deck himself, spyglass in hand.

"Zounds! but I should like to have a crack at him," remarked Thompson.

As he spoke the Russian schooner was seen to suddenly wear round and stand along on the course which Brian had taken.

"She suspects us at last," said the young captain; "and no wonder, as it is high time we emerged from that strip of mist had we continued on as we were going."

"Ay, ay, sir! and—confound her!" cried Bend, "there go her signals to the other Russian, whom I thought we were going to pass so nicely. We are in for it now!"

"I believe we are," said Brian, coolly, as the signals were rapidly exchanged between the two vessels. "The schooner's captain is telling the other about where we are."

"Ay, still there goes her first shot. She is feeling for us!"

The shot came whizzing and whirring across the quarter-deck, passing so close to Minnie that she started back in alarm.

"You had better go below," said her brother.

"No, I'm not afraid. I will stay on deck a while longer."

Will now placed himself by Minnie's side in such a position as to shield the form of the girl from any shot that might come toward her.

Perceiving this, she said to him:

"You are a good, brave boy, but you shall not peril your life for me."

Then, giving him a grateful glance, she went below.

The brig continued to roar with her starboard guns, which were brought in play after she had imitated the Russian schooner, and had worked round.

Suddenly a heavy shot struck the *Swallow's* foretopmast and down it went, falling over the side.

Hearing the crash, the Russians guessed what had happened, and uttered a rousing cheer.

"We are in for it now," said Bend, as usual.

"And here comes the schooner for a change," said Thompson.

In fact, the Russian schooner was coming up fast, now not more than a mile and a half distant.

Minnie came on deck.

"All is lost!" she said to Will, pointing toward the schooner.

"We are in more danger from the brig than we are from the schooner," said Will.

"No, no! the schooner's captain has the eye of an eagle. I believe he sees us now, for if I'm not mistaken the mist has slightly lifted."

"He must have sharp eyes to see us where we are now," said Will, perhaps a little dryly.

A gun roaring from the schooner's bow and a shot so accurately aimed as to carry away the *Swallow's* maintopsail-yard, was sufficient proof that the English craft was now visible from the enemy's deck.

She was seen by the brig, and a continued sheet of fire poured from her ports.

Thus hemmed in by his enemies, Brian, in his little craft, with only three small guns, gave up all hope of escape.

"Hoist that flag a little higher," he coolly remarked to Bend. "It has somehow slipped down."

The flag was hoisted as high as it would go.

"Now, Dick, let us see what you can do," continued Brian to his gunner.

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered the gunner, grinning with delight as he stood ready, his brawny arms bared to the shoulder.

"Oh, Brian!" cried Minnie, "surely there will be a useless waste of life. The bravest man would surrender in your situation!"

"Those fellows will save us the trouble," answered Brian, quietly. "They will soon sink us, but not, I hope, until I can give them a few farewell knocks."

"Wrang!" went the little six-pounder at the same moment, but it was scarcely heard above the terrific din made by the guns of the enemy.

Brian discharged shot after shot at his foes, and for a long time, obscured by the smoke, his craft did not receive much damage, while the vessels of the enemy, more plainly visible, received injuries both in their hulls and rigging.

Meanwhile, in spite of every effort made in his now crippled state, Brian's craft drifted shoreward.

Not even with a crash, she struck upon a sunken reef, and going over almost on her beam-ends, her guns were rendered useless.

A loud cheer from his foes showed Brian that this accident had been witnessed from the decks of the Russians.

The schooner of the latter stopped firing, but the brig continued to pound away, riddling the hull of the *Swallow* through and through with shot.

As the missiles came crashing through her timbers Minnie grasped her brother's arm and pointed to the flag.

"Why not haul down your colors now?"

Brian folded his arms.

"They shall not be hauled down while the craft stands," he said.

"Beg pardon, sir, but I think you go a little too far," said Thompson. "Remember your sister is aboard."

"At any rate, we might escape to the shore," said Minnie.

"Yes; although every boat but one is splintered," answered her brother.

"What shall we do after we get ashore?" cried the young woman.

Brian looked around him.

"Have the boat lowered alongside," he said to Bend, "and all of you get into it."

The boat was lowered.

Will assisted Minnie into it, keeping her person sheltered by his own form.

"Will you not go, brother?" cried the young girl, not perceiving him either on deck or in the boat.

"Brian! Brian!" called Will.

There was no answer.

The youth was about to leap aboard to search for the young captain when he emerged from the cabin.

As he did so, a thick volume of smoke rolled up through the companionway.

"The schooner is on fire!" cried one of the men.

"Yes!" said Brian, exultingly, as he pointed at the smoke, "my craft shall burn to cinders sooner than fall into the hands of the Russians."

"How did it take fire, sir?" inquired Thompson.

"I set it on fire with my own hands," Brian quietly answered.

CHAPTER V.

PRISONERS.

THE moment the smoke cleared sufficiently to permit the Russians to see that there was a woman in the boat which had been lowered from the schooner, they at once ceased firing.

Meanwhile the doomed craft was sending thick volumes of smoke from her cabin and hatchway.

In a few minutes from the time she was fired by her young commander, the lurid flames were darting forth and climbing up the shrouds.

Higher and higher they rose.

The little craft was soon a pyramid of fire. The flames enveloped her fore and aft, crackling and roaring, they shot up, some of them hissing like live things, as they licked the surface of the water.

All at once there was a terrific crash.

High in air rose burning fragments, falling back into the waves, splashing and steaming.

Every vestige of the beautiful schooner, with the exception of a few charred pieces of wood, had vanished.

The flames had reached the powder-magazine, and the vessel had blown up.

The late occupants of the craft were half way to the shore when this happened.

Looking behind them, they saw three large boats in pursuit.

"Here they come," said Thompson. "They are bound to have us, though they have lost the schooner."

"There are about fifty of them, all well armed," said Bend.

"Ay," answered Brian. "No use of our trying to resist so many. If there was but half their number, I should make a fight of it."

"Oh, brother, what will become of you?" cried Minnie, "and—and—of your brave friend?" she added, looking softly at Will.

"Do not concern yourself," said Brian, kissing her. "We will be prisoners of war, and will soon be exchanged."

Just as the light craft struck the beach the Russians overtook it.

Their boats touched the shore on each side of it.

"Surrender!" cried a middle-aged man in uniform, leaping from the foremost boat, which was from the brig.

This was the captain of the vessel.

He advanced toward the group, his drawn sword in his hand, but when he perceived that there was no sign of resistance, and noticed Minnie amongst the party, he sheathed his weapon and raised his cap.

"Who commands here?" he inquired.

"I do," answered Brian, advancing.

"Your sword, sir," said the Russian captain, politely.

"Here it is, sir," replied Brian.

"Keep it, sir," replied the other. "You are too brave a young man to lose it."

"Thank you, sir," said Brian. "As you are so kind, I hope you will do me a favor. Suppose you and I settle the battle between us, with our good swords? Let the capture or freedom of my men depend upon the issue of the combat. If I am victorious, my party and I are at liberty to depart; if you gain the vantage, we are your prisoners."

The Russian captain smiled.

"I should be happy to do so," he said, "but as it is against the rules of warfare, I shall have to refuse."

"I am sorry, Captain Vormok, that such is the case," came the deep, trumpet-like voice of another person behind Brian. "If it were not, I should request you to choose me for your champion."

The young man turned to behold one of the officers of the other boat—the one from the schooner. He was also in uniform, which well became his fine person and handsome face.

His hair was light, his eyes of a dark-brown. A heavy mustache gave a manly expression to his face, which was that of a youth but a few years older than Brian.

"Thank you, Captain Vosk," answered the other commander, laughing, "but I can do my own battles."

Vosk bowed.

"I only spoke," he said, "because I thought that this gentleman and I would be nearly matched in age."

"Captain Vosk," said Minnie, "he is my brother."

The girl, who had been partially screened by the tall forms of Brian and Will, stepped from behind them as she spoke, and confronted the young Russian captain.

He started back with surprise, which, however, he kept well under control, and as he bowed and raised his cap, he said:

"Indeed, I did not know the lady I had seen aboard the English schooner, and in her boat, was Miss Lewis. Had I known it, I would not have fired a shot at the craft."

A rich glow overspread the cheeks of the young girl.

"I believe you," she said, in a low voice, while her gaze was bent upon the ground; "and now—now that you do know it, I hope you will use your influence to have us left unmolested."

"I am sorry to say that cannot be," here interposed Captain Vormok. "By all the rules of war, these people are our prisoners."

"I suppose it cannot be helped," answered Vosk. "But of course the young lady must not be kept a prisoner. I know her uncle—her place of residence is at Okhotsk, and I will gladly take her there. She will have the company of my sister, who is aboard the schooner."

"Be it so," replied Vormok; "but the others—the prisoners—I will take under my own charge to Petropavlovsk."

Thus the matter was arranged.

Minnie felt relieved that her brother and his friend were not to be taken to Okhotsk, where, after their connivance at her escape, they would doubtless be prosecuted by her uncle, who had great influence with Kickavitch, the officer of the garrison there.

Will felt a strange sinking of the heart at the thought of thus parting from Minnie. Moreover, he had noticed the emotion at sight of the Russian officer, and had at once construed it into a sign of partiality for him.

Brother and sister embraced.

Then Minnie held out her hand to Will.

He clasped it, and for a moment felt as if he could never let go of the soft little palm.

"Good-by," said Minnie; then she added, in a low voice, "I feel confident that we shall meet again."

"I hope so," answered Will, frankly. "Good-by!"

Minnie was helped into the boat by Brian and the young Russian captain.

Soon after the rest of the party were in Captain Vormok's boats, and these were pulled toward the brig.

Will watched Minnie as long as he could see her.

At length the boat in which she sat vanished round the stern of the Russian schooner, and he saw her no more.

On arriving aboard the brig Captain Vormok had the common sailors among his prisoners put between decks, with a guard over them, while Brian and his officers were confined in one of the rooms adjoining his cabin, which was also guarded.

"A well-kept craft," remarked Will, when they were seated.

"Well enough," said Bend.

"The men are all good, stout-looking fellows," remarked Brian. "They are excellent to pull on a rope."

"Or at fighting," said Will.

"That I also grant," said Brian. "Give them a leader and they'll do well. The Russian is brave—puts but small value on his life, and that makes a good soldier and sailor of him."

"I only wish we were out of this cussed craft," said Bend.

In the course of the day the officers were separated, Bend and Thompson being assigned to the steerage, while Will and his friend were still left together.

Before night they were visited by the captain.

"Young gentlemen," said he, "if you will give me your word that you will not attempt to escape you have my permission to go about the vessel as you like."

"I cannot give my word to that, sir," said Brian.

"Nor I," said Will.

"Then I will have to keep you here under guard," said Captain Vormok, "much against my wishes."

"You cannot help that, of course," answered Brian.

After they had been served with an excellent dinner, the young prisoners were asked by the captain if they would like to go on deck.

"Very much," replied Brian.

"Do you smoke?" inquired Vormok.

They answered in the affirmative, and the Russian helped them to cigars.

Arrived on deck with the guard, who, however, kept at a little distance from them, the two boys looked around them.

Hardy-looking, light-eyed Russians, lounged about the guns on the upper deck.

Their broad, blue collars, open at the throat, revealed huge necks and square chins.

The planks of the deck were scoured white; the rigging was neatly coiled, and the guns were in order.

"They make a very good show here," said Brian.

"Ay, but I'd sooner be ashore," said Will.

The shore could just be discerned, extending in a blue line off the starboard quarter.

Far away, toward the northeast, were visible the masts of the Russian schooner.

Will fixed his gaze upon the distant craft and sighed, involuntarily.

He was still thinking of Minnie, when Brian said to him, in a low voice:

"I see there is a boat towing astern."

Will, glancing there, saw the warp of the boat; he could also make out the elbow of a man projecting round the edge of the stern.

"I see," he said; "but there is some person in it, probably at work painting over the wood of the brig's stern, where it was scraped by our shot.

"He will leave the boat before night."

"Doubtless; but I don't see how that can affect us."

"We must get into the boat and make off."

"How can we do that? There is the guard."

"True, but I made a discovery just before we came up."

"Ah! what was that?"

The guard was now drawing nearer, so Brian changed the subject.

"Yes," he said, "the air is cool and pleasant up here."

Having remained on deck an hour, the boys turned to go below.

Brian glanced at the barometer as he went.

"We are going to have a gale," he said.

Will looked, to perceive that the barometer had fallen.

The two boys were soon in the room which served as their prison, and the door was locked upon them.

"Now, then," said Brian to Will, "I will show you the discovery I spoke of while on deck."

He went to a small closet at one side of the apartment and opened the door.

He pushed with his hand upon the wainscot forming the back of it, and Will perceived that a plank was loose.

This left, when pressed, an opening about two inches wide, through which was visible a small room, in which was the cabin window.

Opening it still wider, the boys could perceive that it contained no occupant.

"The Russian captain, unaware of this defect in the closet, which you can perceive is not used, has neglected to place a guard in that room," said Brian.

"You think, then, that if we once get there we can crawl out of the window, drop into the sea and swim for the shore?" said Will.

"All excepting the dropping into the sea. We can drop into the boat, which will be dryer and better."

"Yes, if the boat should be there; but by the time we are ready to get into it it will be hoisted up back to its place."

"You are mistaken," said Brian. "The davy-heads, where the sheaveholes are, have been shot away. There is no place to hoist the boat on, unless it be taken in on deck."

"Which will probably be done, especially as there is a storm coming up."

"I am not so sure of its being done before we are ready to enter the boat, which had better be just at dark. There is so much repairing to do, that I think the captain will put off taking in his boat until the last thing."

"If he does we may succeed in getting off," said Will, joyfully.

"It will be a dark night, at all events," said Brian, "and that will help us if we do get started."

"Yes; but we must watch and listen. If we don't hear them hoist in the boat, we may look upon our escape as almost certain."

Hours passed, but the two boys did not hear the boat hoisted in.

"It is dark now," whispered Brian.

"Ay; but here comes some person," said Will.

The approaching footsteps drew every moment nearer.

Soon the door was opened by the steward, who entered with food for the prisoners.

The man looked keenly around him, as if to make sure that all was right, then, apparently satisfied, he left the room.

The moment he was gone Will and Brian went to the closet.

They forced open the loose plank without much difficulty or noise.

Then they walked to the cabin window, and raising the sash carefully, they opened the blinds.

It was pitch dark outside, but the foam of the sea, agitated by the rising gale, could be distinguished through the gloom.

A dark towing astern they made out the boat, the warp of which was fastened to the rail above.

Brian pulled the boat in.

"Jump in, Will," he whispered.

"No, you go first."

Not wishing to lose time, Brian complied. Will followed.

The latter then whipped out his knife, and with one blow severed the warp.

A dark form appeared on the brig's stern as the boat drifted off, and seemed to bend forward as if peering through the darkness.

There was a rough call.

"We are discovered!" said Brian, as the two boys pulled at the oars which they had found in the boat.

Quick footsteps now sounded on the brig's deck, lanterns flashed, and the noise of the moving yards, caused by the hauling aback of the vessel's foretopsail, was heard.

Soon after came the splash of a boat as it dropped alongside.

It was followed by the dip of oars.

"Confound it," said Brian, "I am afraid we will be caught."

"We will be, if we keep on as we are going," answered his companion. "We must head on a course diagonal with that of the brig."

They did so.

The Russians, unable to see them in the gloom and the thick haze, which was now coursing along over the waves, vainly searched for them.

Finally they returned aboard the brig, which was then headed up for the shore, toward which the captain rightly judged the fugitives would direct their boat.

Perceiving the course taken by the brig, Brian now headed the boat away from it toward another part of the land.

For hours the twain continued their exertions. Dawn was approaching, when they found themselves within a mile of a point, jutting out from the coast.

To leeward of them, about two miles off, hovered a thick, misty haze.

The wind, which had been fast increasing, now came on to blow a terrific gale.

The seas rose higher every moment, and the boat was at times shrouded in spray, keeping Brian constantly bailing, while Will vainly endeavored to make headway amongst the violent waves.

All at once the haze to leeward was blown aside, revealing the hull and masts of the Russian brig!

A puff of smoke from her side, followed by the report of a gun, and the whizzing of a shot past them, gave notice to the fugitives that they were seen.

"We are in for it now, as Mr. Bend would say," remarked Will.

"No, sir; hear how the gale roars; it is coming on to blow a perfect hurricane. They would not venture to lower a boat in such a blow."

"Then we are safe."

"Ay, safe from capture, but not from the storm."

As Brian had said would be the case, the wind soon increased to a hurricane.

The tops of the seas rose far aloft, and the two boys, at times half hurled in the water, were tossed and whirled hither and thither.

Meanwhile, the Russian, instead of heading toward them, was making every effort to give the coast a wide berth, for the wind, blowing almost directly toward it, would soon change so as to make it a "lee shore."

The two friends endeavored to keep the boat's head to the sea.

Now and then, however, she would sheer sideways, and plunge, bows under, almost causing her occupants to be swept away by the deluges of water, which then poured over her.

Wearied with their exertions, the boys at last paused.

As they did so, the boat was hurled sideways, and they were again obliged to work hard.

In spite of all they could do, the vessel, which had already been slightly damaged by shot, caught a thump on her bottom that stove in one of her planks.

In an instant, before anything could be done to stop the leak, she filled, gave another lurch, and then turned bottom upward.

The boys clutched the keel and held on to it.

The coast was now not a quarter of a mile ahead, and they hoped to hold on until they should be swept on the beach.

It was difficult work.

More than once they felt as if they must let go.

Their fingers were cramped and their wrists partially benumbed with the hard strain upon them.

The minutes to them, in their situation, were like hours.

Their gaze was fixed upon the rocks of the coast, but it seemed as if they would never reach them.

At last a huge sea lifted them on its crest, hurling them to within a few fathoms of the beach. In fact their feet already struck bottom, but the next moment they were drawn far back as the wave receded.

"Hold on, Will; don't you give up yet!" cried Brian. "The next sea will land us upon the beach."

"I can hold on a while yet," said Will; "but not much longer, I'm afraid."

As he spoke another sea struck the boat, sending it careering toward the beach.

The violence of this wave swept both boys from their hold.

They were, however, whirled along to the shore, high up the beach, near a rock covered with seaweed.

They threw their arms about a spur of the rock and held on firmly, thus saving themselves from being drawn back.

As the wave receded both sprang up and ran higher up the shore.

The receding wave had taken with it the boat, which they now beheld tossed about by the madly whirling waters.

"That boat might be of use to us," said Brian, "if we could get it."

"Yes, we might repair it so that it could be used," replied Will.

A WOLF SNATCHES A NEGRO BABY, AND IS SHOT DEAD BY THE CHILD'S MOTHER.

They watched for the boat, which they soon beheld swept along toward the shore.

Standing on a rock, they had nearly grasped it, when it was dashed to pieces against the rugged mass.

"Gone!" cried Brian. "What shall we do now?"

"We are here, and must remain until we are picked up."

"Fortunately, it is not yet cold weather."

"No, but it soon will be—by the middle of next month."

"We will probably be picked up by some whaler," said Brian.

"Yes, if we can stay on the coast long enough. Of course, as soon as it clears that Russian will be here looking for us."

Both gazed toward the brig, which was now nearly out of sight in the mist and rack scudding over the wild waters.

"I am hungry," said Brian.

"So am I. Fortunately, I have my pistol with me, which the Russians were kind enough to spare, although they took away my sword."

"Have you ammunition?"

"I have," said Will, taking a flask from his breast-pocket. "The Russians were strangely careless in searching us."

"They had not finished the search. I heard Captain Vomok say so to the men who were overhauling us. He was kind enough to leave me my sword."

"So we have weapons which may be of good use to us in this wild country. Suppose we go a little way inland and look if we cannot find something worth shooting at?"

Ascending a lofty height rising up some fathoms back of the beach, the boys beheld before them an undulating expanse of ground, covered with grass and bright with wild flowers of different hues.

Beyond this stretched a dusky pine forest, which seemed to be of interminable extent.

They sat down a few minutes to rest, looking in the direction where the brig had now vanished.

The storm was still raging; the waves were whirled high up, and the foam covered the waters with thick, flying flakes of spray.

"We must have something to eat," said Will, jumping up.

The two boys moved over the field.

Will fired off the powder in his pistol, which was somewhat dampened, and loaded the weapon with a fresh charge.

"You cannot take very good aim in such a gale, which almost lifts us off our feet," said Brian.

"Not unless we get pretty close to our game, which we would have to do, at any rate, to reach it with a pistol."

"True. What is that?" and the youth pointed as he spoke to a small, gray animal about the size of a cat, which was bounding along in lengthy leaps through the grass.

"That is a Siberian squirrel," said Will. "I have seen plenty of them. They are valuable for their fur, but they are also good eating."

He ran along toward the animal, and contriving, by taking a roundabout course, to get behind it, he took aim and fired.

The aim was a good one.

The youth had made allowance for the wind, and his bullet passed through the creature's head.

The two were soon at work on the animal with their knives.

When it was ready, Will gathered some stones, and Brian some dried branches.

A rude fire-place was made in a hollow somewhat sheltered from the wind, and as the boys carried matches, they soon had the squirrel roasting over a good fire.

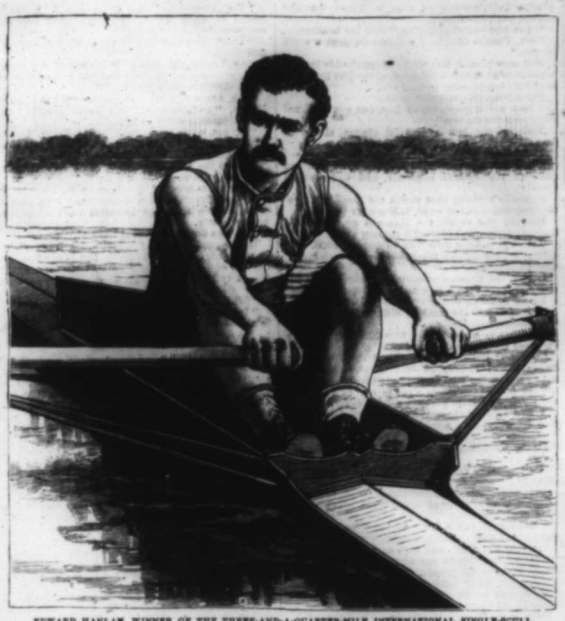
When it was done, Will regretted that they had neither bread nor salt to eat with it.

"The salt is at hand," said Brian. "No trouble about that."

He went down to the seashore, and brought up some of the salt water in a large shell, which he had found upon the beach.

"This will make us a good drinking-cup," he remarked.

"Yes," said Will. "We could not have a better one, and we will need it, too, I think, before we are through with this country."



EDWARD HANLAN, WINNER OF THE THREE-AND-A-QUARTER-MILE INTERNATIONAL SINGLE-SCULL RACE ON THE TYNE, ENGLAND.

He then commenced the seasoning of the squirrel. The water was sprinkled over every part, which was done to a fine brown, and emitted a savory fragrance.

Having thus seasoned the roast, the boys fell to with such hearty good will that in half an hour they had devoured every vestige of the animal.

"Did you have enough?" said Brian.

"Oh, yes; I feel as if I could not move."

"Well, I think we had now better look up a sleeping-place."

"I hope we wake before the Russians come back," said Will.

"There can be no doubt of that. It will be hours before the gale abates, and long after that before the Russian dares to venture near the coast."

The boys soon found a snug place in a hollow behind a bank of the precipice, which was sheltered from the gale.

They lay down side by side and dropped to sleep.

(To be continued.)

"Mishie's Rescue from the Wilds of Siberia" was commenced in No. 653.

A WOLF SNATCHES A NEGRO BABY.

ON Martin's place, five miles north of Millican, Texas, a gray wolf snatched a negro baby sitting in the door of a cabin, and was in the act of running off with it when the mother picked up a rifle and shot the brute dead. Infant Africa rolled over with the wolf as he took his death tumble and was rescued without damage.

EDWARD HANLAN.

EDWARD HANLAN, the Canadian sculler, has scored another victory, defeating Hawdon, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, May 5th, in a three-and-a-quarter-mile race. The stakes were a thousand dollars a side. Hanlan was the favorite from the start, and won by four lengths with the greatest ease.

The boats got off well together, but almost from the first pull Hanlan led. He kept ahead of the Tyne champion with ease, and evidently saved his powers for the end of the struggle. Both men did excellent work, but it was plain from the first that Hanlan was not hurried by his competitor. He seemed confident of success, and during the race frequently turned round to see if the course was clear.

He won as he liked. A northwest wind prevailed, making the water rather rough, and the boat shipped more or less water. Hanlan actually stopped rowing several times and sponged the water out of his boat, thus allowing Hawdon frequently to get on a level with him. Hanlan's slow, lazy stroke contrasted strongly with the 38-43 stroke of the Tyne champion. Hanlan's time was 23min. 3sec.

Hanlan is now matched against Elliot, the champion of England, the race to come off June 16th, 1879, over the same course as his last race was pulled on. Should Hanlan win this last race, he claims the title of champion of England and America.

Edward Hanlan was born in Toronto, on July 12th, 1855. It was not until 1873, however, that he made his first appearance in a shell, contending in that year for the amateur championship of Toronto Bay, and winning it from Williams and McKay. In 1874 he beat London, of Toronto, for the championship of Burlington Bay, and at the same regatta was one of the winning double scullers in the two-mile race.

In 1875, London challenged Hanlan to row a mile race for two hundred dollars, and the latter won easily. In the same year he won the Governor General's Medal, in Toronto Bay, two miles, in single sculls, beating London and Douglass. In the Spring of 1876, he beat McCann and Douglass, and in August of the same year won the championship belt of Ontario, given by the Toronto Rowing Club for a two-mile race.

He next appeared at the Centennial races, in September, and on the first day of the single scull heats pulled against Harry Coulter, of Pittsburgh, and H. Thomas, of London, beating them with great ease, and making the three miles in 21min. 34sec.

Next day he rowed against Pat Luther, of Pittsburgh, and Fred Plaisted, of New York, and came in as he liked in 21min. 54½sec. On the 6th of September he rowed the final heat for the championship against Alexander Brayley, of St. John, N. B., and defeated him in 21min. 9sec. His next public appearance was at the Silver Lake Regatta, June 13th, 1877, when he was defeated by Plaisted in a three-mile race for a purse, Hanlan breaking an outrigger. On June 25th, at the same place, he beat "Frenchy" Johnson and Driscoll, three miles, for a purse of one hundred and fifty dollars.

He appeared at the Boston City Regatta, on July 4th, in the two-mile race, and was disqualified for fouling Plaisted, who won in 14min. 34½sec. In October, 1877, he defeated Wallace Ross in a five-mile race on Toronto Bay, for one thousand dollars a side, the time being about 39min. 30sec.

In May, 1878, he beat Plaisted in a three-mile race at Toronto; in June, defeated Morris, five miles, at Pittsburgh, in 37min. 58sec., and afterward beat Plaisted, Riley, Luther, and others in regattas at Rockville and Cape St. Vincent. Hanlan's return match with Ross, in July last, on the Kennebecasis River, St. John, N. B., proved an overwhelming defeat for the latter. He defeated Charles E. Courtney, of Union Springs, on October, 3d, retaining his title of champion of America.

A LITERALLY NARROW ESCAPE.

THE heroic act of William Roberts, of St. Louis, Mo., was to dive into a cistern through a hole so small that it scraped skin from his body, and keep a boy above water until the woodwork could be removed for their rescue.

THE SCARLET COAT.

By RUFUS SARGENT.

ON a certain bitter day in the middle of last Winter, the saddest boy in all Philadelphia was Joe Hurlbert.

A great misfortune had happened to his widowed mother, and she and her two children—Joe and his sister Margery—were suddenly plunged into the greatest poverty. The landlord notified them that they must give up their house, and many old creditors who had heard of their new difficulties, renewed their demands.

The lady wept, and her children, encircling her with their tender arms, endeavored in vain to cheer and soothe her.

Poor infants! How little did they know of the depths of their mother's sorrow and anxiety!

Joe was the first one to appear brave. He determined to invent some way of relieving the family of its distresses.

He resolved to go up-stairs and put on the scarlet coat.

The scarlet coat was one which his grandfather had left him in his will, and it was his own exclusive property.

It had been worn in the Revolutionary War by a British officer, who was killed in the battle of Trenton.

Its rich color was somewhat faded by time, and the gilt braid with which it was ornamented was considerably tarnished and dulled; but for all this, Joe insisted that it was the most gorgeous garment that was ever made.

It caused him to feel brave when he had it on. When he was sad, or disappointed, or angry, he would always go and find the scarlet coat, and wonder how the brave English officer would have acted had he been placed in a position similar to his own.

It was three times too big for him, and when he walked, its long skirts dragged upon the floor. But this made no difference; he often sat for hours together in the cold garret with this huge thing wrapped around his little person, drowning his woes in the dreams of battles and skirmishes that the war-stained uniform gave rise to.

He now had need of all the hope and joy that he could get.

He took the coat from out its brass-bound trunk, and after shaking it, thrust his arms into its sleeves, and then walked solily over to the high chest upon which he was accustomed to rest. He seated himself in his favorite position, and tried hard to fancy what the British officer would have done had his family suddenly became poor.

He could not imagine.

The fact was, Joe had been so accustomed to think of his hero as being exceedingly wealthy (in consequence of the richness of the gold lace), that it was impossible for him to understand how he could ever have been without his pockets full of money.

He sat and thought and thought. An hour passed.

Still the officer would appear to him as brave, valiant, full of courage, always leading his troops to some fierce assault in the midst of smoke, or marching before them to the sound of splendid music.

It was in vain that Joe attempted to convert him into anything else than a warrior.

A LITERALLY NARROW ESCAPE.—DIVING THROUGH A HOLE TO SAVE A CHILD.

Then his thoughts turned again upon his mother. The rent must be paid. More food must be purchased. More warm clothing must be bought. Medicine for his sister, who was ill, must be got in some way.

But how? Ah, what a question that was!

Money couldn't fall from the skies. Then where could it come from? It must be had.

Joe's distress was very great. His eyes fell for the thousandth time upon his coat. He smoothed the well-worn cloth with his fingers.

All at once it occurred to him to sell the coat.

What! sell the scarlet coat! Sell the best friend that he had! Give it into the hands of some old-clothes peddler! Surrender what had been in the Revolution for four or five dollars (which was all that he would be likely to get for it)! Impossible!

Yet money was wanted. Even four or five dollars would be sufficient to purchase the medicine for the sick one.

"But I couldn't have any more battles, or sieges, or skirmishes," reflected Joe. "There wouldn't be any fun for me anywhere. Besides, it'll come out all right. Somebody will turn up with money enough in a little while. I don't believe that it is as hard as mother thinks it is. It can't be."

He quieted himself thus.

But in some way or other the coat began to lose its charm. It grew warm upon his shoulders, and it seemed to have become heavy. Besides this, he could not make any more pictures of the British officer. His imagination did not work well.

He sat for a little while longer.

Then he got up despairingly, and put the coat away in the trunk again. After that, he went down-stairs.

He was half afraid to look into his mother's pale and anxious face. His sister's sad eyes haunted him.

"Look here," said Joe to himself, "I know she'd be better if she only had some of that morphine that they put her to sleep with, and I don't believe there's any left."

He asked. It was as he suspected—the morphine was all gone.

"But why don't you get some more, sis? You look tired and worn out."

The daughter and mother exchanged glances, but they did not speak. The mother bowed her head and wept again.

Joe left the room once more.

"What a mean fellow I am!" cried he.

He hastened to the garret, and again opened the chest. There lay the scarlet coat.

How beautiful it seemed to him! How dear it was to his heart! How many hours had he spent wrapped up in its folds! How many splendid visions had arisen out of it!

Joe had another contest with himself.

He was defeated a second time.

A second time he put the coat away, and descended the stairs. He was now wretched.

His selfishness tormented him.

More people knocked at the door and demanded money of the poor lady, and one man in particular was very angry.

Joe leaped to his feet. How dare any one speak in that manner! His breast swelled, his eyes burned, and he ran out in the entry-way of their little house, where the man was standing, confronting his mother.

"What does my mother owe you for?" cried Joe.

"For groceries that she had last month," was the reply.

"What is the amount of the bill?"

"It is small. Only twelve dollars."

"Then, come to-morrow morning and I will give you half of it, and perhaps the whole."

"Joe!" cried the mother, in astonishment.

"Yes," said Joe, "I mean what I say."

"Very well," replied the man, bowing. "I will be here at nine o'clock."

"Come at eight, if you like," responded Joe, determined to have the last shot.

The grocer went away, much gratified.

"But, my dear little Joe," cried the mother, "what—how——"

"Oh, you'll see!" cried Joe, soberly—"you'll see, mother."

He vanished, and once more ascended to the garret. It was now quite dark, and through the single window there came a faint, cold glow, that just gave him light enough to see the way.

He opened the chest for the fourth time and took out the scarlet coat.

His heart beat like a trip-hammer.

"I shall have to hurry," reflected he, "or my courage will fly away in spite of me."

He softly descended the stairs, stole noiselessly past the door of the room where his mother sat, and in a moment he was in the street. He then fled as if the dogs were after him.

After he had gotten a safe distance he halted, and endeavored to think where he should go. He decided at once.

He remembered that there was a pawnbroker in B—— street. It was only one block off. In a few minutes he was before the door. Above him swung the three golden balls that always hang outside of these shops.

Joe gazed fondly at his beloved scarlet coat. Tears rushed into his eyes.

"Poor Joe!" cried he; "you're an ungrateful coward. Be a man, if you can."

He pushed open the door and entered. A bell rang. The air was close and the place was small. A little man, with a large nose and a long beard, stood behind the counter.

THE SCARLET COAT.—"HE TOOK THE COAT FROM OUT ITS BRASS-BOUND TRUNK, AND, AFTER SHAKING IT, THRUST HIS ARMS INTO ITS SLEEVES, AND THEN WALKED SLOWLY OVER TO THE HIGH CHEST UPON WHICH HE WAS ACCUSTOMED TO REST."

Joe placed the scarlet coat before him.

"I'd like to sell this," said he, in a trembling voice.

The man took the coat and looked it all over carefully. Then he put it down upon the counter and pushed it back again to Joe.

"Don't want it," said he, crossly. "How much you take for it?"

"Six dollars," said Joe.

"Six dollars!" gasped the other—"six dollars! I will geeve you one dollar and a half."

A dollar and a half! Joe's heart sank like lead. He took up the coat. What would the British officer have said? Would he not have drawn his sword and pinned the old pawnbroker to the stall?

But the grocer's bill and his afflicted mother!

"You see, dat is wore to pieces," said the pawnbroker; "it is a hundret years old; "it ain't worth nothin' but rags."

Joe's spirit nearly failed him. Was his great treasure good for nothing? Was the only thing that he valued worth, after all, only a dollar and a half?"

His eyes once more became blind with tears.

He passed his hand half affectionately over the breast of the mighty coat.

His fingers met a little lump about as large as a pea.

This was odd. Joe had never noticed it before. He felt of it curiously. Then there seemed to be two lumps, then three, then four, five, six, ten, twenty.

Joe turned the coat the other way—that is, he felt of the lining. The lining was worn.

Joe thought it was full of small pebbles, or bits of stone.

He found a hole in the cloth. He pressed one of the lumps out.

It fell into his hand. It was small, white, and very brilliant.

He held it up to the light. It cast out a dazzling glitter.

"Hi!" cried the pawnbroker, eagerly, "vat is dat? Let me see him."

"Guess not," said Joe.

"Oh, do—oh, do, if you please. Zust let me take him in my hand," pleaded the other.

Joe brought out another lump, then another.

"They're diamonds!" cried he.

His heart bounded high within him. His cheeks flushed. He hastened to the shop-door. He heard a sound. He looked behind him, and saw the pawnbroker scrambling over his counter.

Joe fled. As he ran past the window outside, he looked within, and saw the old man wringing his hands in grief.

"I'm safe from you, at any rate," cried the lucky boy. "Now for a jeweler's."

He hastened with winged feet. He knew just where to go?

He fled from B—— Street, and all the wretched quarter, and came to a beautifully lighted thoroughfare, holding his coat meanwhile with the greatest care.

He reached one of the largest jeweler-shops in town.

The clerks looked with great astonishment at the excited boy and his scarlet coat plied upon his arm.

"Ah, Joe!" cried one of the members of the firm. "What is the matter? What have you got there?"

Joe related the trouble that he was in, gave the history of the coat, and then, after telling of his interview with the pawnbroker, produced one of the bright bits of stone that he had taken from the coat. The gentleman examined it carefully.

"Joe," said he, "it is one of the purest diamonds that I have ever seen. It is worth two hundred dollars."

"Two hundred dollars!" exclaimed Joe, almost taken off his feet. "Two hundred dollars for one! Why, I've got a dozen more, and the coat is full of them."

The gentleman sent for a carriage.

"Joe," said he, "we will ride to your home, and your mother and your sister shall help us unravel this pleasant mystery."

Fifteen minutes from that time a happy party of four sat around a table, slowly tearing to pieces two large quilted paddings, that had been taken from the breast of the scarlet coat.

They found over thirty diamonds, having an aggregate value of forty-five hundred dollars.

These had probably been placed in his coat for safe-keeping by their old-time owner, who, having been suddenly killed in battle, had left no information respecting them behind him.

Thus they had come to fall where they were most needed.

All the wants of the poor family were immediately supplied, and Joe had the supreme satisfaction of paying the grocer in full on the next morning, for the rich jeweler gave him some money on that very night.

Joe still keeps his scarlet coat, and he still is accustomed to put it on whenever he is in need of encouragement or pleasure.

It also reminds him of his own selfishness, and also of his own victory over himself. He loves it more than ever, and he would not part with a single tarnished button for twice its weight in gold.

It still lies in its brass-bound chest, and Joe has fully made up his mind to be a soldier. He doubts, however, that he will ever pack diamonds away as the great British officer did, though he feels a tremendous obligation to him for having done it.

THE DEVIL'S CAVE.

WITH our loaded guns on our shoulders, ample game-bags at our sides, and with watchful eyes in our heads we sauntered along through the tangled roadway, which was gradually leading us from the village into the depths of the forest.

The pretty town of Sandy Hook, with all its bustle, we had just left behind us, and we could yet hear the low murmuring of the old factory, and the occasional puffing of the steam-whistle betokened the neighborhood of civilization when all other sounds and evidences were lost.

It was one of the last days of August, and the sun was doing its best in the blistering business, and we were thinking only of that shady pool beyond, to which we were directing our steps. Of course, we had started out to *hunt*. "Squirrels and woodcock," so we *said*; but there was, somehow, a sort of understanding between us that we were not to lose our chances for a shot by too careful scrutiny of the game, even if we *did* happen to hit a partridge, once in a while.

"Of course, the "game laws were a necessary institution, and all that, but then, you know, a fellow "can't most always sometimes tell." The birds are all the same color when they're in the grass, and when they take wing we can't stop to study ornithology before taking aim—"of course not." We didn't *say* this, you know, but we both "*thunk*" it.

While we were thus soliloquising, we both were startled by a sound in our near neighborhood, closely resembling the drumming of a partridge. We cocked our guns simultaneously.

"There's a woodcock around here somewhere," said I.

"Yes," says Jim; "I distinctly heard him flap his wings."

"I'll bet——"

Whir-r-r! Bang, bang!

The bird had risen a little to the left of us, and not being able to carry the heavy weight of shot which had been poured into him, he dropped in a convenient blackberry-bush. (We won't say what he was, but from this distance I see that he has not a long bill.)

"The biggest one I ever see," cries Jimmy, clambering over brambles after his prize, "and his bill has been shot clean off.

We both *smote* a simultaneous smile, and made our first contribution to the game-bag.

We now paused to reload, and while engaged in this occupation our attention was arrested by a rustling in the shrubbery at our right. Nearer and nearer it approached, and; although we could not see twenty feet on either side of us, we knew that the cause of the commotion was within short gun range, if we could only draw a bead on him.

"I'r'aps it's a bear," I suggested, in a whisper.

"No! it ain't a bear," returned Jim, in a low, anxious tone; "bears don't go to work that way. One thing is sure, it's either a guyroscutas or a rhinerockaroarase, and we had better each of us give him both barrels as soon as he shows himself. It's our only hope."

Nearer and nearer came the rustling, until the nearest bushes began to shake from the boisterous approach of the creature. The guns were both brought to the shoulder, and the barrels leveled at the bush.

"Hey, rellers! vot you shutes!" exclaims a voice from the verdure, as Hans Sauerkraut tumbles from the still vibrating branches.

"Ach, ach! Mein Gott!" he screams, with uplifted hands, as his eyes encounter the weapons

THE DEVIL'S CAVE.

leveled at his red Dutch cap. "Vot for you shoots me? Mein Gott!" and he dumps himself behind a rock with the agility of a fiddler-crab. Once safe he becomes vociferous. "Py tam! you dakes me for a woodcock, hey? I shoost show you vot kint of shickens zis hairpins vas," and so saying, he brandishes a huge horse-pistol around the edge of the rock and lets her fly. It was our turn to do the fiddle-crab business now, and it is most astonishing how circumstances may accelerate one's powers in that direction.

The shot flew around promiscuously, and we both tried to gain sufficient presence of mind to reel of ourselves and pluck ourselves to see if we were dead or alive. The stillness of death reigned for a few minutes after the Dutch explosion, and when Jim dared to peep from his concealment it was only to encounter the aim of that same unique weapon, reloaded and ready for another volley, and with a glittering eye and a red cap just showing above it from behind the rock.

"How vose dose tings, hey? How you likes mein shoots, you vellars pehind se shtones? I kif you mein vord, I dot you vos two shippee birds ves I shoots mit mein pishtol off, dose times."

"Come, let up on us, old man," I ventured; "we were only lotin'."

"Lotin'! Py tam!" muttered Hans. "Yah; das ish vat I dond, too, don't it?"

"Yes," replied Jim. "But yours was a little too much like business."

"Pishness? Yah, wohl, pishness is goot mit mein leetle pisthols. He shoots goot. He shoots petter ten times so dose tubble shodder shoulter guns, mit ter too leetle triggles, py tam!"

"That's so, old man—that's so. But you'll let us up now, won't you?"

"Hah! mebbie dese vellars pehint de shtones don't petter haf dond round mit shoot hems no more some dimes—ain't it? How vas dose pebints, vat I shoots mit mine pisthol off? I pet dey vas some scratchun verse as de seten times itch pelint dose shtones."

About this time Jim began to feel a strange tingling sensation in his southeast portion above alluded to, and a further examination proved that he had really received a little lead into his system.

There was no joke—it was a stern reality.

"By the great horn spoon!" he exclaimed, with a frightened expression, "that blasted Dutchman has shot me!"

"I tells you vat you does, you vellars," cried Hans. "You shust go some gattnips und cook him mit some shtove water, and rub him all oler mit your hant."

This was capital advice, but we were neither of us in a particularly good mood to receive it.

We had been punished for our foolish audacity, and, not caring for a second volley from the Dutchman, we hoisted one of our handkerchiefs and cried "truce."

Hans spied the handkerchief, and at first, supposing we were holding it up as a mark for his horse pistol, was about to fire upon it, when we explained its meaning, and the whole affair was amicably settled.

The sun had grown hotter and hotter, and our lively experience had quickened our circulation to such an extent that we were fairly boiling over with heat. We resolved to go up "under the mountains," beneath the cool cedars, and there regale ourselves.

"Mebbe I go mit you," volunteered Hans, "to show you de vay," and we all three started along in the hot sun.

Every now and then Jim would pause by the wayside, and do a little rubbing on the quarter aforesaid, and Hans would occasionally say something about "gattnips."

He was a good-natured Dutchman, after all. We had neither of us ever seen him before, as we were comparitive strangers in these parts.

We joked and laughed, and *scratched* over our novel experience, and before long found ourselves beneath the dark, cool evergreens. We all sat down on the mossy rocks, and were soon much refreshed by the woodland breezes which swept beneath the trees.

Hans was very talkative, but it wasn't our fault that we did not always understand what he was driving at. He would persist in getting his sentences "hind side-afore," and his verbs were horrible to contemplate. But he was a good fellow, after all.

We had been there about half an hour when a bright idea seemed to strike him.

"How vos dose tings?" he sehd. "You feels goot already."

We assured him that we were quite comfortable.

"By-te-crate shpoons, I vas von hairpin. You gomes mit me; I goole you off, by tam!"

There was no refusing him, so we followed his footsteps through the woods.

"I pring you mit dose place vere you vreeze already," and on he sped triumphantly through the thickets, over rocks and fallen logs, making the woods echo with his broken Dutch abortion of the English language, in which the phrases, "Shtone hole mit te grund," "Vreezin-place," and "Colt as iache greemes," were of frequent repetition.

He finally came to a halt on the edge of a rock, and pointing downward, he yelled back to us:

"Vot I tells you! Mebbe you don't got some valk fur noddings."

Following the direction of his finger, we spied a small cave beneath the fallen rocks, with an opening about ten feet across.

"Vot I tells you, hey? You like iache greemes, hey? Vone nite de odder day I goomes here, und bring dree bushel iache greems mit my pail off."

While he was thus expressing himself we had approached the entrance of the cave, and in its depths—although it was in the last of a heated August—could easily perceive the remnant of ice which our Dutch guide had sweetened into "dose iache greemes." But we can truthfully say that ice cream itself could have tasted no more delicious than those cold fragments which that cave afforded our parched tongues. Thus was I first introduced to the Ice Cave of Sandy Hook, Connecticut.

Many were the legends which our companion narrated to us in relation to this cave—legends in which his satanic majesty, "Ter Duyvil," took a leading part.

The cave was known in the neighborhood as the "Devil's Hole under the Mountain," and from its name one would never imagine to find such a nice, cool spot. The cave itself was not very spacious, being merely a large, irregular fissure between rocks which had fallen upon one another in some convulsion of nature.

But it is a natural curiosity on account of the deposit of ice which is always to be found in its depths.

We spent the rest of the afternoon in the neighborhood, killed one or two "woodcock," and finally parted.

"Mebbe some more dose days you shotes mit me, hey?" remarked Hans, as he shook hands with us.

"Gattnips, mine frient, gattnips!" and his Dutchship vanished in the brushwood.

Jim and I wended our way homeward. I suppose it was awfully mean of me, but I couldn't help laughing once in a while at Jim's strange antics, and I willingly forgave his bursts of anger at the mention of "gattnips."

We met on the following day; Jim was feeling better.

"How many, Jim?" I anxiously inquired.

"Enough for a load," said he, and the subject was dropped out of respect to his feelings.

We have many times visited the Ice Cave since this eventful occasion, and always find it cool and delightful. It is a great resort for picnic parties, and even in the hottest Summer day one may always enjoy a drink of ice-water from "Under the Mountain."

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

(Continued from page 261.)

When Violet left the hotel she procured a lodging, but feeling very tired and apprehensive there amongst entire strangers, she at last determined to apply for shelter to Mrs. Gray, at River Bank Villa, who had treated her with marked kindness when she visited her.

But while she was on her way the storm commenced.

The terrible clap of thunder so startled her already unstrung nerves that she could endure no more, but fell senseless to the ground on the spot where Theodore found her.

Now, however, she was in a place of safety.

Now she could listen to her lover's protestations, and receive the delicious assurance that he was, with the consent of his parents, hers, and hers only for ever.

What more need be said respecting our heroines? Only that—that in due time the dreams of their young romance were fully carried out, inasmuch as they had married the heroes who had figured so conspicuously in them.

We add also that the rest of the club were peculiarly fortunate in obtaining the precise partners they wished.

Often and often did they talk with one another over their school adventures, and many a hearty laugh they enjoyed over the reminiscences attached to the Meditation House.

Pet, the romantic Pet, whose hopes had been so cruelly blighted with regard to Violet Leigh, at length shook off his despondency, and began to look abroad for some other object upon which to place his affections.

For some time he looked, yet looked in vain; but eventually Fortune, in one of her beneficent moods, decreed that he should cross the path of Miss Matilda Maggs.

This incident took place at the door of the shop kept by her maternal parent, who supplied a considerable portion of Acton with milk, butter and eggs, and did altogether a very good business in this particular line.

On this eventful day Pet had bidden adieu for ever to his nagty attire, with its incalculable quantity of buttons, and was arrayed in all the glory of a new suit.

He had also polished himself up with unusual care.

From the crown of his hat to his boots there was an appearance of newness that was unmistakable.

The small youth was quite conscious of this, and derived much satisfaction from the fact.

It was as he was strutting past the shop of Mrs. Sarah Maggs that he first became conscious of the existence of her daughter.

The fair Matilda was standing listlessly at the door basking in the sunbeams, and inhaling the fresh breeze, when Pet burst upon her sight.

She looked at him from out a pair of large blue eyes, and he looked at her from beneath the brim of his hat, and the thought at once flashed across him that he gazed upon one destined to take the place which Violet had formerly occupied in his affections.

Yes; somehow or other he felt that his future fate was in some mysterious way, which he could not explain, bound up with that of the yellow-haired, blue-eyed damsel at the milk-shop.

It was only natural, under these circumstances, that he should slacken his pace; that he should approach the window, and under the plausible pretence of examining the new-laid eggs exposed there for sale, glance surreptitiously at the fair being who had come so suddenly and unexpectedly before him.

It was equally natural that Matilda Maggs should notice his proceedings, and that she should—Peter Pippins being an extremely smart and dapper little fellow—feel flattered by such attentions so discreetly and modestly offered.

And thus for some time they remained.

She at the door, pretending to look at nothing particular, and he at the window, affecting to be deeply interested in eggs fourteen a shilling, but with one eye always on the yellow-haired lassie.

But everything must have an end. Pet could not stay there for ever, and so at length, withdrawing his eyes, he fixed them upon the blue orbs of Matilda Maggs, and with a smile, remarked that it was a fine day.

Matilda smiled a little, and giggled a little, as she replied that it was.

This was encouraging, and the susceptible youth continued to improve the opportunity by suggesting that it was a shame to remain indoors in such lovely weather.

To this Matilda fully assented, but alleged as a reason that in the absence of her mamma, it was necessary some one should mind the shop.

"But I'spose," said *Pet*, "when your ma returns she wouldn't object to your goin' for a stroll?"

"Oh, no," returned Matilda; "I always go out in the evening."

Always! The idea was rapturous in the extreme.

"Do you, though?" he contrived to ejaculate.

"Yes, really."

"A-lone?"

"Generally; that is, except when my cousin goes with me."

"Your cousin?" exclaimed *Pet*, suspiciously.

"Yes, my cousin Jem."

Horror and despair flashed in the features of the listener.

But these feelings were quickly dissipated by Matilda saying, sweetly:

"I mean Jemima."

"Oh," ejaculated Pet, quite revived. "Ah, I see; Jemima. And will she accompany you this evening?" he added.

"No. She is in town to-day."

"Is your cousin's absence might I be so bold as to offer my humble self as your companion?"

"Oh," returned the fair one, "what would ma say?"

"I don't suppose she'd object," said Pet.

Matilda glanced blushingly at the speaker.

There was something about his appearance so smart and bright that she felt herself involuntarily drawn toward him.

"I shall have no objection to go for a little walk with you this evening, but I mustn't stay out very long," she said.

"Long or short," exclaimed the enraptured Pet; "only come, loveliest of girls, and I shall be content."

And so the loveliest of girls—and we may add the prompest—kept her word and went for a stroll with Peter Pippins all unbeknown to her mamma.

The walk proved so entirely satisfactory that it was often repeated, and in the course of a month Pet was the accepted suitor of Matilda Maggs.

He had rivals, of course, each of whom regarded the fair Matilda with an eye of admiration.

But Pet triumphed over all, and being a great favorite with the maternal Maggs, he was not only assured of becoming the husband of her daughter but also the proprietor of the milk and egg business, to which in due time he succeeded.

Pet's married life was as happy as his affairs were prosperous, and often in the future did Kit Crump, who settled in town, and who also prospered, drop in and smoke a pipe, etc.

The fair Hawk (matrimonially speaking) did not go off; and finding from year to year no sighing swains at their feet, they became naturally disgusted at such neglect, and quite ferocious in their antipathy to the male creation generally.

They devoted themselves more assiduously than ever to the instruction of youth, and to abstruse, strong-minded subjects as a means of recreation, till they became as sharp and frosty as a pair of icicles.

It was quite a shock to Miss Elizabeth Skinner when it transpired that the rival who had won from her the hand of Theodore Westlake was her despised cousin.

She never forgave her for it, but this did not trouble Violet, who could afford to be generous, and forgave her.

Miss Skinner, in course of time, married out of sheer spite an unsuspecting Cornish youth of mild and docile temperament, who never had a happy moment afterward.

THE END.

ORVILLE AND DAN;

Or,

Adventures in Japan.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK,

Author of "KEEP YOUR BOUNDS," "INVENTIVE DEB," etc.

CHAPTER XX.

JAPANESE JUSTICE.

THE bravo who had assaulted Dan was a Ronin, or discharged soldier of the rebel prince. These men hate foreigners, and many of them, like the Jorri (patriot assassins), are under vow to kill the strangers on sight.

Although Orville had no arms, he carried the flag, the staff of which he used with good effect in knocking down his brother's assailant; while plucky Benkei jumped upon the wretch and took away his sword.

"Hello," said the chief telegraph operator, peeping out of his office window. "What's the difficulty?"

By that time a crowd of well-disposed Japanese had gathered about the wounded boy and were expressing their sympathy upon her sight.

"Take him into my house," said a wrinkled old woman; "a nice character we shall have if our townspeople treat strangers in this way."

A dozen policemen were soon on hand, the Ronin was secured, handcuffed and walked off, and Dan conveyed into the telegraph office, where his garments were removed, revealing a long, ugly, though not deep, wound extending diagonally from shoulder to hip.

"Here, let me come in," said the old woman before mentioned. "I will soon patch the poor boy up."

The telegraph operator, who was keeping the people out of the place, permitted her to pass, and, when she had examined the cut, she produced some strips of mulberry-bark paper, and bidding Orville and Benkei close the edges of the wound, plastered it with the tough, fibrous substance.

"Don't take your hands away until this dries," she said.

A crimson line welled up and stained the paper, but quickly dried, after which she told them they could remove the pressure, remarking:

"I once had my husband almost cut to pieces. I papered him in this way, and now he's as sound as ever."

Orv thanked the old lady and offered to pay her; however, she would not take any reward, and giving him some more of the paper, told him to apply it if needed, then retired.

"That's a good stuff," said the telegraph clerk, whose name was Jim Kidder. "When d first came here I was slashed as you have been, yet, thanks to the paper plasters, my wound healed in twenty-four hours. Boys, you must stay with me for a while. What brought you to this out-of-the-way place?"

Orville explained, and introduced Benkei, and when they had taken Dan into an inner room and placed him on a lounge he related their adventures.

"Well, I want to know!" ejaculated their new friend. "It's unlucky you were attacked in this way. The Ronins have nearly all been disarmed and I had no idea there were any in this place. Excuse me; some one is calling from the next station, Kanagan. I'll be back in a minute."

As they listened to the clicking of the instrument in the office, Dan feebly said:

"The consul was right, Orv; civilization and barbarism go side by side in the country, but we must carry out our programme and see the elephant."

"Now, don't you exclte yourself," cautioned his brother. "If you move, I shall have to stick more paper on your back."

"I'm all right now," answered Dan. "I'd like to sit up."

"You just stay where you are," growled Orv. "If you feel well, you don't look it. Lie still; there's a good fellow."

"What do you think, boys," shouted the operator, from his office; "I have just received news of the grand walking-match in London. Ennis has carried off the Astley belt."

"When did it take place?" cried Dan, sitting up, only to be gently returned to a horizontal position by his brother.

"It ended last night," said Kidder. "It's a big thing, aint it?"

"Yes," said Orv; "did he beat Rowell?"

"Whipped him into fiddle-strings," was the response, as the operator worked away at the instrument. "Listen to the record. Ennis six hundred miles. Brown five hundred and ninety, and the New York pawnboy, Brodie, five hundred and eighty. How is that for time?"

"That's good," said Orville. "Hush, Dan; now don't you excite yourself;" then, turning to Benkei, added: "Ain't we a wonderful people, Ben?"

"Did your countrymen invent the telegraph?" asked the latter, "I thought the English did."

"They are always taking credit for what we do," indignantly answered Orv. "Our Benjamin Franklin was the first to bottle lightning, and Morse the one to use it in sending messages."

"You astonish me," politely answered the Japanese. "I thought Franklin went to the North Pole and was lost with all his crew."

"I'm afraid you are lost, my friend," was Orville's chuckling response. "The Franklin you refer to was an Englishman, and no relation to our scientist and printer."

"But, excuse me," stoutly returned Benkei, "I've read about it in the *New York Herald*."

"That's no guide," said Dan, who laughed until he almost reopened his wound. "For goodness sake, don't confound the author of Poor Richard's sayings with the man who died in trying to discover the North Pole."

"All right," good-humoredly answered Benkei. "You forget I am a Jap and never went to an American high school. Now I wish to ask you a favor."

"Go ahead," said Orv; "we'll do anything you want. You've been kind enough to us."

The young man hesitated a moment, then said: "Would you mind me wearing the same kind of clothes as yourselves. I'm no longer a bonze, and don't wish people to think I am one; besides, I mean to let my hair grow."

"You won't serve us as Cheeseman did?" chuckled Orv.

"No," was the reply: "you know that; and another thing I want is for you to call me Ien."

"Certainly," they said; "only it sounded strange not to address you by your full name."

Soon after the Benkei started out, taking with him a suit of Dan's clothes, and when he was gone Jim Kidder rejoined them, and they had a long conversation about home.

It seemed scarcely possible for them to be sitting there chatting over things that had occurred but a few days previously in the States, and they could not avoid commenting upon the circumstance.

"What kind of a country is this, anyhow?" asked Orv. "Is it safe to go out without being armed? We have read a book that states all manner of horrible tidings, and asserts Japan is no place for foreigners, while Benkei tells us it isn't true. After Dan getting such a clip, we begin to doubt whether it wouldn't be as well to carry some sort of weapon."

"Nonsense," said Jim, puffing at his pipe. "Three years ago, when I was leaving the States to come here, I bought a brace of revolvers, a repeating-rifle, a sword and a bowie-knife. When I arrived at Tokio I brandished all over with arms, and imagined that every other man I met was a Ronin, for, in those days, the natives nearly all carried swords. My first experience was one night when I took too much sake and got into a row, in which I used my bowie and killed a man in self-defense. Take my advice and explore the country under the protection of our flag; that's all the arms you'll require. If you meet a swaggering native hoodlum, with a sword stuck through his girdle, give him a wide birth; it's better than shedding blood; his own people will attend to him if he touches you. They'll fix the bully who gave you that cut, to-morrow at sunrise. The governor has sent a dispatch to Tokio, and the Emperor's reply was, 'Behead the man!'"

"I am sorry," said Dan. "Can't we get him off?"

"And have him walk in here some morning and make mincemeat of me?" said Jim. "No, thank you; I want to go home next year, and wish to keep my head on."

When Benkei returned he looked quite comical in a tall, white hat, about which was pinned a broad band of crape.

"Where did you buy it?" asked Jim. "I sold that when I first came here, and did not know it was in existence."

"I bought it in an old curiosity-shop," innocently responded Ben. "Isn't it fashionable? I've seen them worn in Hako-date."

"Nobody wears crape unless they are in mourning," grinned Orv.

"You forget I've lost my uncle," gravely answered Benkei; then he twitched the corner of his mouth and added, "I'll wear it, now I've bought the apparatus."

The next day an official called upon them and inquired about Dan's wound, and when the boy said he was doing nicely, informed him that his assailant had been beheaded for his crime.

CHAPTER XXI.

BENKEI ASSUMES AMERICAN GARMENTS.

"WHAT!" exclaimed Orville, "do you mean to say you tried and sentenced the Ronin without having us there as witnesses?"

"Yes," gravely replied the officer; "plenty of our people saw the deed performed, and the prisoner did not deny the guilt, his only regret being that he had not killed your brother. The judge wishes to know if this will satisfy you, or whether, like the English, you want recompensing for your injury?"

"Recompensing?" ejaculated Dan. "You have done all you could to show your regret. I can sit up this morning, thanks to your wonderful paper-plasters, and really feel sorry that I should have been the object of the Ronin's hatred and cause of his death. Your promptness in trying and executing him is astonishing."

"How do you you manage those things in America?" asked the official. "We like to adopt your customs."

"This way," said Orville, with a grin. "Suppose you came to our country, and a rowdy took a

into his head to shoot you for the fun of the thing. If you had any money you would get a gorgeous funeral, and people would say: 'Poor fellow.' If you were like ourselves, not rich, you would be put in the ground without much ceremony. If only badly wounded, they'd take you to the hospital and operate on you. No one would offer to pay you anything by way of recompense."

"But how about the assassin?" asked the amazed Jap.

"Oh, he'd become famous," chuckled Orv; "they'd publish his picture in the papers, people would pet him, and reporters would take down his opinions about all sorts of things; he would swear he had never seen you, and, in fact, be the hero of the hour."

"I have always heard you *hang* people for murder?" said the man.

"Not immediately after they have committed the offense," replied Orv. "We keep the wretches until we are sick and tired of hearing about them, after which, if the murdered person was of any account, we sometimes hang the assassins. I am sorry to acknowledge we have more sympathy with murderers than pity for their victims."

The visitor rose, and, bowing, said:

"I do not think we shall adopt your plan; if we did, the Ronins and Joris would exterminate us in a year."

The brothers quite agreed with him, and the official took his leave, perfectly amazed at the extraordinary custom of the American people.

"Boys," said Jim Kidder, "why did you tell the officer that?"

"Because it is the *truth*," stoutly answered Orv. "I think it is about time we altered matters and treated murderers as they deserve."

"Come," said Benkei, "let us talk of something more pleasant. My opinion is there are too many people executed in my country and not enough in yours, and before you arrive at Yedo you will see I am right. I want to exhibit my new clothes and to have your opinion about their style."

"All right," they replied. "Go ahead and dress yourself."

When Benkei had retired, the telegraph operator said:

"He beats all I've ever come across. You'd never take him for a bonze?"

"Yes," said Dan; "he's real smart and as true as steel. Has the emperor destroyed all the Buddhist temples?"

"No," said Jim, "he wouldn't dare to do that. He fixes one of them at a time, under the pretence of having helped the rebels, and manages the business so neatly that he disperses the people who run the show and prevents them ever again resuming their occupation," adding, in a pitying tone: "I don't know what the poor fellows are going to do for rice and tea."

Orville told him they had provided some of them with a profession, and described the Iburi baseball clubs, hearing which Jim almost choked with laughter.

"Hush!" whispered Dan; "here comes Ben. Now for a revelation."

The Japanese tailor employed by Benkei had made a suit the same size as the pattern, and Ben being shorter than Dan, it was very wrinkly about the lower limbs, added to which, not being used to pants, he walked very wide.

"What do you think of me?" he asked, pointing first to his sandaled, naked feet, then at his suit, which was of blue cloth, and finally at his overtopping hat, the brim of which weighed down his ears. "Am I not now in the mission?"

"Oh, I shall die," groaned Dan, turning to the wall and stifling his merriment.

"What's the matter?" demanded Benkei, glancing first at Orv and then at Jim, who was grinning like a baboon. "Don't the things set right?"

Kidder darted into the telegraph office, and Orville, after laughing until he was almost exhausted, replied:

"Oh, they *set pretty fair*, but where's your *undercloths*?"

"Eh?" was the innocent response. "The man said he could not make them, and I thought I wouldn't put on *too many things at a time*. If you had only worn one garment all your life you would feel as I do. The seams of these scrub awfully."

"Oh, stop," yelled Dan; "you'll kill me if you don't."

"Jerusalem," groaned Jim, from the office, "this beats anything I've seen in the country."

"Oh, my gracious," moaned Orv, who was doubled up on a chair; then, presently picking himself up, he murmured: "You'll excuse us, won't you?"

"Most certainly," naively replied Benkei. "I know I look comical, but it's nothing to what I feel. I'm tight-fitting all over."

"See here, Ben," said Dan, turning round and suppressing his merriment. "We've got lots of underclothes, and can supply you."

"And I can let him have some neckties, a pair of shoes, and a straw hat," snickered Jim, looking into the apartment. You go to the tailor's with him, Orv, and have about a yard cut off the legs of his pants and the sleeves of his jacket, then he won't look as if he'd just been turned out of Chatham Street."

"All right," was the response. "Come along, Ben."

That afternoon Benkei appeared quite presentable, though his bald head gave him a prematurely aged appearance.

"Dan," he said, as they sat round the supper-table, "I'd like to give you my best robe of yellow crape and my embroidered collar. I do not wish to retain any memento of my old profession."

His friend accepted the present and inquired how long Benkei's head had been shaven.

"Ever since I had any hair grow on it," he said. "Do you not know that until foreigners came here, nearly all Japanese boys were thus treated?"

"What ceremony did you undergo to became a bonze?" asked Orv.

"I had three pastiles burnt on my head," was Benkei's innocent reply. "They hurt me, I tell you, and my hair will never grow on those spots. After my uncle had removed the ashes he gave me a yellow robe and a collar—I knew all the rest; I was to live on rice, tea, fruit and vegetables, and make money out of the people. Now I am going to have a good time, eat and drink what I like and work for a living."

As he ended this speech he twitched the left corner of his mouth and rolled his eyeballs, noticing which Jim laughed, and Dan asked what Ben's motions meant.

"We do it for the same reason that you wink," he merrily answered. "Until foreigners came here no Japanese ever shrugged his shoulders, put his finger to his nose, winked, or indulged in kissing."

"You seem to have learnt our customs," said Orv.

"Not the last," slyly answered Ben. "You forget I was a bonze. Never mind, I'll make up for it when I get a chance."

"Why do you prostrate yourself upon the floor and utter a gulping noise in the presence of your superiors and in saluting friends?" inquired Dan.

"It's a mere custom," he returned. "Why do you raise your hats and bend your heads to people?"

"Goodness only knows," said the boy. "I suppose because our forefathers did, and it's the correct thing to do."

The friends remained the guests of Jim Kidder until Dan's wound had completely healed, after which they hired two porters to carry their baggage, and prepared for their long tramp.

"You take my advice, boys," said Jim, and follow the line of telegraph poles to Tokio. If you do this you can communicate with me at every station. You will come across four on the road, worked by Japanese whom I have taught, who will treat you kindly, and send me word how you get on."

The friends promised to do this, thanked him for his kindness, and uniforming their flag, marched through the town, Jim accompanying them as far as the suburbs, where they beheld an immense sign-board, rooted in to keep it from the weather, beside it being a pillar on which was set a human head.

"What is that?" said Orv, pointing to the board.

"That is a *Kosatsu*," (edict board), whispered Benkei. "It says the evil sect called Christians are strictly prohibited, and upon it is pasted a paper describing the man who once owned yonder head. It states that he was decapitated for attempting to assassinate an American gentleman named Daniel Filamore."

"They are a strange people, are they not," remarked Jim, as he bade them good-by. "That's about how you'll find everything in this country, but it is not half a bad place, as you will say when you know more of it."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE NEW MINISTER.

WHEN the young explorers reached a hill overlooking the city, they waved their flag and gave three cheers, Benkei and the two bearers shouting:

"Ya-a-a-a-ah! Hi-i-i-ah!"

"Excuse me," said Orv, who carried the Stars and Stripes; "please do not indulge in that minstrel cry. You must say, 'Rah! rah! rah!'"

Ben turned to his countrymen and translated what the boy had said, adding:

"Come, let's make another attempt."

"That's better," said Dan, approvingly. "You are rapidly picking up our ideas. Are you ready to resume the march?"

"Stop a moment," urged Benkei. "Suppose, while you are in my country, you follow Japanese customs? It will be the best way for you to learn all about it."

"That's a good idea, Dan, isn't it?" said Orv. "We'll drop talking our own language until we reach Tokio."

His brother agreed to this and they resumed their journey.

The scenery of the province of Mutsu, or Rikuoku resembles that of Yezo, and its northern part is mountainous and covered with dense forests; therefore they saw little that was novel, nor did they meet with many of the inhabitants.

At sunset they would camp under a tree and sleep until daybreak, then unfurl their flag and march southward, taking only two meals a day and living principally upon rice and tea.

In this manner they journeyed, and after a ten days' tramp reached the celebrated iron foundries in the province of Rikuchin, where they were welcomed by Mr. Oshima, the chief of the mining department, who kindly showed them over the works, which covered a large space of ground.

As they were inspecting the blast-furnace, a half nude, bronzed figure, who was directing the workmen, turned to them and laughingly inquired in English:

"Well, boys, how are the old folks at home? Are you doing the Sergeant Bates business in this country?"

Upon hearing this question Dan, who was carrying the flag, felt rather foolish.

"Oh, it's all right," continued the speaker, advancing and shaking their hands; "although I am *undressed* like a Japanese, I'm a fellow-countryman."

"Bless me," said Orv, "we thought no one had seen our glorious banner in this wild spot. What is your name, sir?"

"Patrick Washington O'Brien," he said. "I come from Pittsburg to teach the people how to make steel. We have over fifty Americans in these works. You must stop here a few days and be my guests."

The brothers accepted his invitation, and inspected the rest of the establishment, consisting of puddling-furnaces, steam-hammers, rolling-mills, coke-ovens, etc.

"We mine our own coal," said Mr. Oshima, "make our own charcoal, and do our own repairs. These works cost nearly a million yen (dollars), and were only completed this year. Up to this time iron and steel have been made made by us, in one way, for a thousand years. Come and take some refreshments at my house."

The explorers followed him into a neat building and enjoyed a hearty meal, consisting of cold roast beef, potatoes, English pickles, rice and Japanese tofu (bean curd), with tea and sake to wash it down, the latter being partaken of by their host and Benkei.

At four o'clock Mr. O'Brien joined them and announced that horses were ready to convey the young travelers to his residence, and when they had taken leave of Mr. Oshima, they mounted and accompanied the overseer.

"We Americans have quite a little village up in the mountains," he remarked. "Were you not astonished to find some of your countrymen here?"

"No," said Orv; "we've given over being surprised at anything. One minute we see people living almost like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and the next come across iron-works like we have at home. I suppose when we get to Tokio we shall see the Mikado in a milky driving a pair of fast-trotting horses."

"He hasn't quite come to that," laughingly answered their friend. "He'll surprise you, anyhow, if you see him."

They rode on, ascending at every step, and winding in and out among beautiful woods of maple and pine-trees, until they arrived in sight of a cozy nook, in which was nestled quite a pretty village, with wooden houses built on the American plan.

"Unfurl your flag," said Mr. O'Brien; "you needn't be ashamed of it, boys."

"We are not," said Dan, winking at him; "only we don't want to annoy you with our Sergeant Bates business."

O'Brien laughed, and as Orv unfurled the colors, remarked:

"Now, let us give them a cheer. My folks will think it's the minister come. We've sent for one from home."

The boys responded, and presently saw the Stars and Stripes run up on a staff in front of one of the houses, and heard their salutations replied to by a crowd of children, while a number of ladies hurried to meet them, waving handkerchiefs as they came.

"It's a shame to make them think the minister has come, then disappoint them, ain't it?" said Dan.

"Filamore!" whispered O'Brien to Orv, "what business is your short-haired friend?"

As Benkei was some distance behind he did not hear what passed, or would he have cared if he had.

"He was a Buddhist bonze," replied Orv. "He is a splendid fellow, and has been ever so good to us. I'll own, with his growing crop, he looks rather comical; but he's a man, he is."

"Can he take a joke?" breathed O'Brien.

"Yes," said Orv; "he's up to any fun."

By that time Benkei had reached a grass-plot, and Dan had alighted, so they followed suit, and O'Brien introduced to them to his wife, saying:

"These gentlemen are two newspaper correspondents from New York, sent out to discover us, as our friends have long been lost in the wilds of Japan; and this gentleman," indicating Benkei, "is the minister who has come with them."

He spoke so seriously that they believed what he said, and inquired the clergyman's name, whereupon he told them it was the Reverend Mr. Benjamin Key; then, feeling if he did not retire he would laugh, remounted his horse, and taking the reins of the other steeds, led them to the stable, leaving the ladies regarding the new-comers with mingled feelings of astonishment and disappointment.

So intent were the former upon scrutinizing the minister, they paid little attention to his companions, and none of them did more than bow and murmur:

"How do you do?"

"Yokio too bad, isn't it?" whispered Dan to his brother.

"Hush," said Orv; "don't spoil the fun."

Benkei smiled and nodded graciously, though, truth to tell, he was at a loss what to say.

He had lived too long among foreigners not to understand what O'Brien had done, and while not angry, thought the overseer was making fun of his late occupation.

The ladies consulted among themselves, and their visitors overheard the following remarks, which were made as the entire party moved slowly toward the settlement:

"He's a queer looking minister, ain't he, Mrs. O'Brien?"

"Hush! Mrs. Jervis; he looks awful dark, don't he?"

"I believe he's a native, who has been educated for the ministry in America."

"Hush, Sarah!"

"He's awfully disappointing, don't you think?"

"Oh, perhaps he's a good preacher?"

"I wonder whether he's Orthodox?"

"I wish they'd sent a nice-looking young fellow. I'd have married him."

"Say, Mary Jane, ask him if he's Evangelical."

By that time Orville and Dan had got pretty well ahead and were choking with laughter, while poor Benkei was wishing he had never learned English.

When they reached O'Brien's house he welcomed them, saying, as we watched the ladies who had halted in order to discuss the minister:

"Come, Matilda, bring your friends in and shake hands with the new minister; you are treating him rather badly, and you, children, keep quiet; I can't hear myself speak."

One by one, as though not at all pleased, the women advanced, and as they halted in a body, the lady who had been requested to ascertain Mr. Benkei's opinions thus addressed him:

"Say, are you Orthodox, or how?"

For a moment his eyes twinkled and the corner of his mouth twitched, then, falling upon his hands and knees, he said, in a satirical voice:

"Beautiful madam, I was once a bonze," and, after rising, he added: "I am sorry Mr. O'Brien has thus imposed upon you. I wish I were your new minister?"

It was good for O'Brien that he was the foreman of the works, or possibly the ladies would have made it warm for him; as it was, they scolded him severely.

"You should not have played them such a trick," said Orville. "See how disappointed they are."

"Oh, that's all right," he laughingly replied. "They've been talking about the expected arrival for the last three months, and I was sick of it, though I shall be glad enough when he comes, for we want him. I must apologize to you, Mr. Benkei, and trust you are not offended."

"Oh, no," he said. "I didn't mind for myself at all. I hope they won't dislike me for it."

The ladies assured him it was not his fault, and he became a prime favorite with everybody, particularly the children.

After supper they assembled in a large, barn-like building called the Town Hall, in which was a piano, and indulged in dancing and music until late in the evening, the proceedings terminating by their singing "America."

Orville, Dan and Ben slept in the hall-room, there being no other accommodation for visitors. When the people left them for the night, the brothers expressed a hope that their friend had not felt annoyed at O'Brien.

Benkei smiled and said he had enjoyed the fun immensely, adding, as he curled himself up on his sleeping mat:

"I thought I should have choked when they asked me if I were Orthodox. What would my poor old uncle have answered?"

"I know," grinned Dan. "He'd have offered to sell them some paper-prayers."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A NOVEL USE FOR KEROSENE OIL.

"MY gracious!" exclaimed Dan, as he attempted to open his eyes the next morning. "What's the matter with my head? Are there any lacquer-trees about here? I'm poisoned, and can't see out of my eyes."

"No more can I," said Orv, whose head resembled a prize squash. "Where are you, Ben?"

"Hello," yawned the latter, rising and stretching himself; exclaiming, as he caught sight of them, "What has come to you?"

"Surely there must be some lacquer-trees in this place," moaned Orv, as he tried to open his tightly-closed eyes.

"Oh, no; I know what it is," answered Benkei, seizing a towel and slapping it vigorously at some enormous musquitoes that had been operating on the boys, and were now settled on the walls. "It's the *Dai-ku*; they are poisonous. Here's half a dozen of them been at you."

"Are they vampire-bats?" asked the blind ones.

"No," he replied; "they are a very large kind of musquito found on the eastern side of Hondo. They lay their eggs in the hollows of the lacquer-trees, and you are quite right about that being the first cause of the poison."

While they were grumbling at their infliction, O'Brien entered the building, and on seeing them, remarked:

"There, now, I forgot the musquito-nets. How stupid of me?"

"Can you do anything for us?" urged Orv. "My head feels like a balloon."

"And mine like a big potato," said Dan.

"Our doctors have a medicine for this," remarked Benkei. "It's called in English 'Answering the question.' Have you a native servant?"

"Yes," said O'Brien; "we have a cook."

"Will you kindly send her here?" asked Benkei.

The woman was summoned, and upon being questioned, said she had some of the medicine, and presently produced an earthen bottle marked all over with Japanese letters, and a graphic picture of a dead musquito.

Ben poured the contents into two saucers, and gave one to Mr. O'Brien, bidding him apply it to the bites on Dan's face, neck, hands and feet, while he attended to Orv.

"Powough!" ejaculated their host. "It's awfully strong sort of stuff."

"Never mind what it is," moaned Dan. "I'd swallow some if it would do me any good."

It required great delicacy to apply the liquid, the bites being so terribly distended; however, after a while, the swellings began to go down, and the boys' features resumed their regular expression.

"It's a wonderful lotion," said Dan, as he smelt the bottle. "There's unrefined kerosene in it."

"Oh, yes!" replied Benkei; "I have been told the secret. It is composed of equal parts of earth-oil and the juice of garlic."

"There's a fortune in this thing," remarked O'Brien. "When you boys go home you had better manufacture it."

"I'm afraid our folks would think the cure worse than the disease," said Orv, who was sniffing in a very uncomfortable manner. "I'm glad it's fixed me, but would like to have a wash."

Mr. O'Brien procured them some sheets, in which they wrapped themselves, then the two followed him to a bathing-house built at the foot of the mountain, when, pointing to two large tanks sunk in the ground, he said:

"This one is warm water and the other is cold; they both flow from springs that rise within five yards of one another."

"We shan't get scalded, shall we?"

"No fear," was the reply; "it is not boiling."

In another moment the boys were swimming about in the warm bath, and after taking a dip in the cold they showed few traces of the musquito-bites.

"Why do you call these insects *Dai-ku*?" asked Dan, as they dressed themselves. "I know *Dai* means great, but my book says *ku* is a note of interrogation."

"It's a Japanese joke," said Benkei. "It signifies that the insects are like impertinent people, always asking questions."

"That's one for you, Dan," chuckled Orv. "Ben's got you this time."

"I did not mean that," pleaded Benkei. "I'm always ready to tell you anything."

"I own we Americans are inquisitive," said Dan. "We shall trouble you worse than the musquitoes have us before we get to Tokio."

Benkei's mouth twitched as he slyly answered:

"I doubt if your questions will cause my head to swell."

"You are a real smart one," said O'Brien, admiringly.

"Of course," said Ben. "Don't you know I'm the new minister?"

They had a good laugh over this, after which the four quitted the bathing-place, and joining the children on the grass-plot, played with them until breakfast was announced.

Their meal consisted of beefsteak, baked potatoes, buckwheat cakes, fried hominy, hot biscuits and coffee, and as the boys looked round the table and heard the children cry, "Please, marm, give me some more syrup," or "another piece of steak, pop," they could scarcely credit they were in the wilds of Japan, while Benkei polished off his food as though he had not been raised on rice and tea.

"Where do you get your beef?" asked Orv, as they rose to leave the table.

"The Government imports cattle from Shanghai especially for us," answered Mr. O'Brien. "You must please excuse me now, as I have to go to the works."

"We will accompany you," said Dan. "We would like to stay here, but, if we linger, shall not reach Tokio before the Winter."

"Oh, you must stop over a day or two," remarked their kind hostess.

"Yes," chorused the children; "you must stay."

Spite of their persuasion, the travelers were firm, and taking leave of the good folks, rode down to the manufactory, where Mr. Oshima handed them a telegram.

"What's this?" said Orv, opening the envelope and giving the contents to Benkei, who translated as follows:

"Dear boys. I am glad to know you have arrived as far as the Rikuchiu Ironworks. After you leave them you will enter the most interesting provinces of Japan. Good luck to all three of you. Jim Kidder."

When Orville had replied to the message, they bade their friends adieu and started southward, leaving behind them the woods and entering a district in which were many groups of mulberry-trees.

Instead of peasants' mud-huts they beheld thatched-houses, neatly built of wood; and their road lay through fields containing peas, beans, wheat and millet, with here and there a cluster of mulberry-trees.

"This is the beginning of the raw-silk district," observed Benkei. "All the provinces in this part of Hondo raise silkworms. I propose, as you are desirous of learning everything, that we leave the coast and travel through the centre of the island. You are in no great hurry to get to Tokio, are you?"

"None at all," they said. "You are right, we wish to learn the secrets of preparing silk and how they make the lacquer, which is so much admired all over the world. Upon our return to the states we intend to use our knowledge.

For several days they beheld the most romantic scenery, and finally reached the province of Rikuzen, where the inhabitants treated them like old acquaintances and invited the party to partake of their hospitality.

"When are we going to get an insight into the silk business?" said Orville, one morning, as they quitted the farmhouse; "why didn't we ask these folks to show us?"

"I have a relative in the village," said Benkei. "He not only breeds the worms but prepares their intestines for fishing-lines. The people we have here to staid with might not have cared to explain everything as he will."

About noon they arrived at a neat dwelling-house, behind which were groves of mulberry and chestnut-trees—and a number of farm buildings.

A ruddy-faced man was looking over the bamboo-fence, seeing whom Ben said:

"That is my uncle, Seisuke. See, he does not recognize me."

CHAPTER XXIV.

JAPANESE SILKWORMS AND THEIR PRODUCTS.

BENKEI'S uncle was clad in a loose pair of cotton-cloth pants, which reached to his knees, his body was bare, and he had a towel tied about his forehead, while between his lips he held a tiny brass pipe, which he constantly replenished with tobacco.

"The best of fortune to you, travelers," he said, as the party advanced. "I see two of you are *Ijin* (foreigners)."

"Yes, we are *Be-koku-jin* (American men)," said Orv, airing his Japanese. "We have come to pay you a visit, Mr. Seisuke; your fame as a silk-worm-breeder has already reached us."

"I am greatly honored," answered the old man. "When the Government ordered me to prepare silk and gut for the exhibition in your country, I thought my time was thrown away; instead of which I have received large orders for my articles to be sent to America. Come in and rest; you must be tired after your long journey."

When they were seated upon the floor of the living-room, and the women of the house had brought them tea and other refreshments, Benkei said to his relative:

"Have you not a sister residing in the province of Musashi?"

"Yes," said Seisuke; "I have not seen or heard of her for some years. Next month we shall have a post-office in Sendai, and then I mean to write her a letter."

"Post-office!" exclaimed Orville. "I thought those were merely for the use of foreigners?"

"No, indeed," he responded. "The Mikado has ordered these conveniences in every *ken* (provincial town), and has issued stamps, just the same as are used by other nations."

"Where did you hear that?" asked Dan.

"I take a newspaper," he returned. "It is called the *Awakened Nation*, and is full of information about everything. By the last news the Mikado had suppressed the Temple of Iburi, which I think was a very good thing to do. It's a shame we should have to keep a lot of lazy, bald and empty-headed bonzes, who are like locusts—ready to eat anything."

"But meat," said Benkei, twitching the corner of his mouth and rolling his eyes.

"Oh," laughed the old fellow, "they do that when they have a chance. You," indicating Ben, "look as though you had either been in the business or in prison."

Benkei rose, advanced to his relative, bowed profoundly, and replied:

"Most worthy Seisuke, I am your unworthy nephew, the son of your sister. Look at my head and you will see that your surmise is correct. I was one of the lazy bonzes belonging to Iburi, but am now on my way to Tokio, where the Mikado has promised to provide for me."

They had good fun over this, and the women were called in to be introduced to their relative, after which the boys expressed a wish to be shown over the silk-farm.

"Come," he said, "it is time to feed the worms, who will shortly begin to spin. You have arrived at a good period to see things."

The old man summoned the females to follow him and led the way to the outbuildings, which were neatly made of wood, with paper windows and doors, the two latter admitting about as much light as though they had been glazed with ground glass.

In the first house were some boxes containing cut mulberry-leaves, and from them the operators filled small bamboo-baskets; then entering the next apartment, proceeded to feed the worms, which were crawling about on frames, resting one above the other in a sort of scaffolding, placed in the middle of the room.

"To-night," said Seisuke, "we again give them food and furnish them with clean frames. We are obliged to take away all refuse, or the creatures would soon die. They are more tender to rear than children. When they show signs of spinning, we prepare some *Mabushi* (little bushes made of straw, in which the grubs spin their cocoons), then take the worms in a lacquered bowl, carry them to the spinning-room, and place them in the straw, where they form their cocoons. As soon as the latter are spun, we begin the business of preparing the silk, when everybody on the premises is employed. The worms I raise are called *Oshiro*. They make a big, white cocoon, and the silk, though tender, is first-class. The green cocoons make stronger but inferior silk. My wife and daughters reel the threads by placing the cocoons in a cast-iron basin, set in a portable clay oven heated by charcoal. When the water is the proper temperature, they pick up two threads and pass them through horsehair loops to a wooden reel, which they turn with their left hands, using their right to tend the cocoons in the basin. That is how we reel *Ki-ito* (raw silk). The floss of the thin and unclean cocoons, and those cut by the insect in escaping, are made into *Mawata* (silk wadding), which commands a good price. What with caring for the eggs in the Winter, when we have several times to soak them in cold water and dry them, feeding the grubs in the Summer, reeling the silk and saving the eggs for the next crop, and tending the mulberry-trees, we have plenty to do all the year round, in addition to which we raise wheat, and some seasons make lacquer."

"I thought you spoke of silkworm-gut," said Orville, who had listened most attentively to the foregoing.

"I forgot that," he answered, motioning them to follow him, and quitting the silk-houses they walked through the mulberry-grove until they reached a little hill, upon which stood some grand chestnut-trees, sheltering a number of buildings made like those they had just left.

"What a smell of vinegar!" exclaimed Dan, as they entered one of the rooms, where the women who had proceeded them were busily engaged about shallow tubs placed upon the floor.

"Are you making pickles?"

Seisuke laughed, and squatting down before one of the tubs, bade them follow his example; then fishing out a brownish-looking object about half the length of his middle finger, held it up, saying:

"This is a kind of silkworm, called *Shiragamushi*, which we feed on the leaves of the chestnut-tree. It would not pay us to reel their silk, so we make fishing-lines of the creatures' intestines. When the worm has reached its full size we throw it into vinegar that has been boiled once; you see one now between my fingers; it is dead. In this next tub the worms have a slight cut just behind the head and a little piece of gut is projecting from the incision. We pick the shiraga up, take the body between our left thumb and finger, and pull out an inch more of the thread with our right, then throw it into the next tub, where the vinegar bleaches and toughens the gut. This pulling out is continued until the interior of the worm is emptied."

"How much will each one yield?" asked Dan, who was greatly pleased with the ingenuity of the people in utilizing such a substance.

"From five to six feet," was the reply. "I have had them give as much as seven and eight."

ORVILLE AND DAN.—"'MOST CERTAINLY,' NAIVELY REPLIED BENKEI. 'I KNOW I LOOK COMICAL, BUT IT'S NOTHING TO WHAT I FEEL. I'M TIGHT-FITTING ALL OVER.'"—SEE PAGE 278.

"What do you get per length?" said Orville, as he watched the women who performed the pulling operation most dexterously, and tossed the soaked grubs from one tub to the other. "It must take an awful long time to fix them."

"I receive about two cash for each piece," said the old man; "and it takes about a month to pull them. I make all the way from fifteen to twenty thousand lengths a year."

"What!" ejaculated Dan; "you are only paid from three to four yen (dollars) a year for all that labor?"

"I'm satisfied," was the quiet response. I remember the time when we did not get half as much. It pays me equally as well as raising silk."

"I give it up," said the boy. "To-morrow we shall probably meet one of your noblemen smoking an imported Manilla that cost him seven thousand five hundred cash. In a week he'd spend more for cigars than would keep you and your family for a year."

"Yes," nodded Seisuke; "it is quite probable you'll do so, but he is a noble and I am only a poor peasant. You surely do not consider I am his equal?"

"I do," quickly replied Dan. "In the United States one man is as good as another."

"Then I suppose you all smoke expensive cigars?" chuckled the old fellow. "I am contented to be a tiller of the soil and silk-farmer, so long as I haven't to pay any more taxes."

When they had passed through two or three rooms, each of which contained the worms in pickle, they reached an apartment where they saw bunches of the dried lines ready for the jobbing dealers, who would come to buy them in the Fall.

"Whenever I see a gut-line again I shall think of you," said Orv, addressing their conductor. "You Japanese need never be afraid of showing Americans how you manufacture articles; the price of your labor would effectually bar us from competition, and I do not think we could invent machinery suitable for this purpose."

That night they staid with the silk-farmer, and Benkei related his experience at Iburi, and said how glad he was to relinquish his old profession, winding up his account by turning to his uncle and inquiring:

"Do you not think, most worthy Seisuke, I look like an American?"

His relative ejected some tobacco-smoke from his nostrils, and after surveying his nephew complacently, murmured:

"If you really require my candid opinion I will give it. You look exactly like a Bingo monkey. Why can't you dress as I do?"

"Because I am going to be a government official," said Benkei, blushing through his brown skin. "I forgot the old saying, you should never go to your relations for compliments." Then addressing Orville, he inquired: "Your uncle wouldn't have said such a thing to you, would he?"

The brothers chuckled at this, and Orv assured him that their relative, Captain Bowers, would have been even less complimentary.

The next morning they bade the old gentleman and his family good-by, and started for the province of Iwashiro, carrying with them a note from Seisuke addressed to a man named Yamo, who was celebrated for the quality of the lacquer-varnish produced upon his farm.

"Now," said Benkei to them as they waved their farewell to his kinsman, "look out for being poisoned. The bite of the Dai-ka is nothing to what you may experience."

CHAPTER XXV.

ORVILLE OBJECTS TO BEING SWINDLED.

AFTER quitting Seisuke's farm, Orville, Dan and Benkei, with their attendants, proceeded in a southwestern direction between two ranges of mountains, and in due time reached Fukushima, one of the chief cities in Iwashiro, where they saw a magnificent castle, built upon a high granite foundation, surrounded by a moat.

"There was an awful fight in the place during the rebellion," said Benkei. "The Daimio had twenty thousand soldiers under his command, and in those days was the supreme ruler of the province; how he is degraded and living like a private person in Tokio."

"Who owns his castle?" inquired Orv. "It seems to be going to ruin. I'd like to visit it."

"The Daimio is supposed to still be the proprietor," answered Benkei. "But what can he do? He has no money, and the silk-farmers and varnish-producers are not rich enough to buy such an establishment. I think the emperor wishes these places to drop to pieces, as a sign of the decay of the feudal system."

Upon entering the city they beheld every sign of active life, and noticed people being carried in *Norimons*, a sort of Noah's Ark, slung upon a heavy beam that rested on the shoulders of four coolies, while others rode in what was called a *Jin-riki-sha*, a vehicle made like a two wheeled baby-carriage, furnished with a hood and big enough to hold a full-grown person; these conveyances, which were drawn by one or two men, the boys dubbed Pullman cars, and as they felt tired, engaged three of them, and told their living propellers they desired to be taken to the best inn in the city.

It was a novel experience for the lads to be wheeled along like children, and as Orville waved the American flag, their procession created quite a crowd, many of the inhabitants never having seen a foreigner.

"Whoop 'em along," shouted Dan, who was in the third conveyance. "*Ha yaku!* *Ha yaku!*" (Hurry up.)

As though acting upon the suggestion, the men who were dragging Orville's car ran foul of a pile of crockeryware and capsized it and the boy, the noise of the falling bowls bringing the proprietor out of his store,

"I demand payment for this," cried the man; then, addressing the by-standers, continued: "It's bad enough for strangers to be walking all over our country, without having them destroy our property. When I lived in Nagasaki we had to pay for damaging them, and now these fellows are in our power, we'll make them hand over."

"My friend," said Orville, in Japanese, "please don't waste your breath. Make out your bill and I'll settle it."

The dealer ground his teeth, his idea being to create a riot, in which the boys would have been badly treated. However, finding he could not accomplish his purpose, he seized an ink-brush (pencil) and wrote the following account:

200 pieces of porcelain	20,000 cash
Damage to my business	40,000 "
Remuneration for my loss	80,000 "
	140,000 cash.

"There!" he said, flourishing the account in Orville's face, "pay, pay, pay, or I'll take you before the judge."

"I'll pay," quietly answered Orv, handing the paper for translation to Benkei. "How much is it, Ben?"

The latter read off the items and indignantly exclaimed:

"Don't you submit to such extortion!"

By that time a large crowd had collected, and things began to look threatening, the people of the city not having any great liking for foreigners.

"Well," shrieked the dealer, "will you pay, or how?"

"Come," whispered Dan, who had descended from his Pullman car—"come, pay his bill and let's get out of this. See, the natives are regarding us in anything but a friendly way. I'd rather lose the fourteen dollars than have any trouble."

"Oh, I'm not going to submit to being cheated," said Orv; "besides, if we let them bully us now we shall have more trouble afterward," with which he turned to the dealer and demanded: "What do you mean by damage to your business and remuneration for your loss?"

The man mounted on to the pile of earthenware,

THREE BOYS.—"'MASTER HINCKLEY,' SUDDENLY SPOKE IN THE DEEP, SONOROUS VOICE OF DR. BETTS, 'WHAT HAVE YOU AND YOUR BROTHER BEEN DOING TO YOUR FACES?'"—SEE PAGE 283.

and raising his arms, thus addressed the crowd:

"You men of Fukushima, listen to me. When I was in Nagasaki, I accidentally broke a sheet of glass in the window of a *To-jin* (foreign) house. The pane was worth about one yen (one dollar). I offered to pay this, but the red-bearded monster who owned the property had me dragged before the district magistrate, who fined me four yen for the glass and the damage to the man's business, and made me pay twelve more yen for his trouble in having me punished. Now this one wants to object to my little bill."

"W-a-a-a-ah!" roared the mob, closing threateningly about the spot.

"Come away!" once more whispered Dan. "We shall get our heads broken."

Orv shook the folds out of his flag, and stepping on to an inverted tub, glanced at the angry faces surrounding him, and slowly replied in Japanese:

"My friends, this worthy gentleman is laboring under a mistake. The red-headed person who made him pay so extravagantly must have been an Englishman. We are Americans! Behold the flag of our nation. In our land your countrymen go and come as they please, and we don't make them pay ten times the price for everything. I am willing to give this dealer twenty thousand cash, and to present you with the same amount for deciding the case."

This speech was received with shouts of applause, none of the spectators having any objection to accept a few coins, so Orville, after paying the bill, tossed a like sum among the crowd, who, to show their friendship, procured another *Jin-riki-sha*, and placing him in it, escorted the party to their inn, where they were received by a smiling landlady and a host of waitresses.

"You fixed that matter first rate," said Benkei. "I expected every moment to see some Ronins or Jori come out of their hiding-places and attack us, and after the dealer made his speech thought you would have to pay the entire amount."

"I did like some of our folks do," answered Orv. "I gave part to my creditor and the rest to the lawyers, though, truth to tell, I own I felt a trifle shaky."

In a little while the landlady entered, followed by three young women, bearing tubs of warm water and towels.

These damsels knelt before the travelers, and made motion as though about to remove the boys' shoes and stockings, seeing which Orville and Dan flushed like young ladies, and said they would prefer attending to the matter themselves.

"Nonsense!" said Benkei, in English; "it's the custom of our country."

"Well, then, I shan't follow it," stoutly answered Dan.

"Nor I," said Orv, motioning away his attendant; then addressing the landlady in Japanese, continued, "All right, marm; we can see to ourselves."

Upon hearing this the woman and her servants retired, and when they reached the corridor the brothers heard her say:

"*Naru-hodo!* (Did you ever!) Those foreigners have no more idea of gentility than beggars. I wonder whether they cook their own meals? I believe that young fellow with them is a bonze who has been deprived of his temple. We shall know if he orders poultry for them—he will be sure to ask for it if he is what I think."

Benkei snickered as he listened to this, and after they had finished with the tubs summoned the landlady and thus addressed her:

"Madam of the house, we would eat of roasted chicken, fried fish, eggs, vegetables, sponge-cake and candles. We would also drink of tea and sake. Let these be forthcoming immediately. These," pointing to his companions, "are foreign princes, who are not used to the chipper-clap of idle tongues."

The good woman was evidently scared by his manner and speech, and courtseying low, promised to give them the best her larder afforded, and in less than an hour spread a tempting repast upon the floor.

WANDERING WILLIE.—"THE NATIVE UTTERED A LOUD CRY, THREW UP HIS ARMS AND FELL ON HIS BACK, REMAINING MOTIONLESS AS IF DEAD. 'HURRAH!' EXCLAIMED WILLIE, ADDING, 'FATHER, WHERE ARE YOU?'" MR. HILL EMERGED FROM HIS HIDING-PLACE."

"Ben," said Dan, as they cleared the bowls, the meat, etc., being cut into morsel, "don't take too much animal food at first; it will make you bilious."

"I'll be cautious," he said. "It's so nice that I could eat all day. How I pity those poor, miserable Buddhists!"

"What do you believe in now, chum?" inquired Orville.

"In having good things to eat," he answered. "If my uncle had only tasted of roast chicken I really think he would have been grateful to the Emperor for releasing him from his vows. Poor old fellow, he went through life living on rice and tea."

At the conclusion of their repast the hostess bowed her head on the floor and inquired if they were satisfied; then presented her bill for the food of the travelers and their servants, which was paid.

About seven o'clock she reappeared with sleeping mats, wooden pillows, and candles made of vegetable wax, and when she had placed them upon the floor, handed in another account for their night's accommodation and received the cash for the same.

"Sleep peacefully," she said, as she backed toward the door; "if you are sick in the night, call to the porter who watches in the main hall. My husband is a very skillful barber, and will be pleased to bleed you."

"Why do they insist upon our paying after every meal?" asked Orville.

"For this reason," yawned Benkei: "Suppose there was a fire to-night, even if she could not save anything else, the landlady would carry off her money-bag, therefore she wishes her guests to owe her as little as possible."

A few minutes after Ben ceased speaking the travelers were sleeping soundly.

About midnight Dan was awakened by the cries of people in the street, who were yelling:

"*Hiso yoje!*" (Look out for the fire.) "*Cud-jee! cud-jee!*" (Fire! Fire!)

The boy rose, and pushing back one of the paper windows, saw men in uniform rushing hither and thither, carrying little fire-engines and shouting the alarm at the top of their voices, following them being assistants bearing ladders, hooks and various implements for pulling down houses.

The scene was one of great confusion and excitement, in the midst of which the watchman rattled at their door and exclaimed, in a frightened voice:

"Rise and flee; all the northern part of Fukushima is in flames, and the lacquer ("varnish") stores are in a blaze. Quick, or you will be overtaken by the liquid fire."

(To be continued.)

"Orville and Dan" was commenced in No. 497.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.

E. J. DONNELLY.

A PROMINENT and promising boy is E. J. Donnelly, messenger 729, No. 509 Madison Street. The subject of this sketch was born October 5th, 1863, in East Thirty-second Street, New York. When five years old he entered the Fifty-second Street Public School, where he did not rise to any particular eminence, owing to a natural mischievous disposition. He managed to keep his head above water, however, and when he left school on the 13th of June, 1877, he was immediately employed as office-boy by Doctor E. J. Hogan, of No. 294 Madison Street.

The doctor evidently thought there was good stuff in him, and no doubt would have offered him the facilities for becoming a physician, but Donnelly, being always on the move, did not give him a chance, and left him some time in March, 1878.

April 30th, 1878, was the day on which he was placed in the ranks of the American District Telegraph Company's messenger corps.

On the 23d of May, 1878, probably one of the greatest events of Donnelly's career took place. About four o'clock in the afternoon of this day young Donnelly emerged from the company's office, 239 Broadway, holding in his hand two dollars in bills, which he was about to put in his pocket, when he felt himself clutched from behind, and before he could turn around the money was snatched from his hand. Donnelly found the robber to be a stalwart negro, who rushed away and endeavored to hide himself in the crowd, which at the time was very large on account of the parade of the Seventh Regiment.

Donnelly succeeded in catching him by the coat, but the negro tore himself away and ran in the direction of the City Hall Park. The boy still followed him, shouting for the police, and officer McGuire hurried up and seized the fugitive. The prisoner was committed in default of one thousand dollars bail, and was afterward sentenced by Recorder Hackett to two and a half years at hard labor in the State Prison. For this service Donnelly was made mail-boy, and presented by the company with a silver Maltese cross with an appropriate inscription; he also received complimentary letters from his superior officers. He held the position of mail-boy until the 7th of January, 1879, when he resigned on account of sickness. He was reappointed on the messenger force March 27th, 1879, and is now plodding along on life's highway in the Tenth District office, corner Park Place and Broadway, the office in which he was employed on the 23d of May, 1878, when he captured the thief.

Donnelly's parents died when he was quite young, and he is now living with his uncle and aunt.

E. J. DONNELLY, MESSENGER-BOY OF THE AMERICAN DISTRICT TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

EDWARD JOSEPH MITCHELL.

ANOTHER noteworthy boy is Edward Joseph Mitchell, now manager of the American District Telegraph Company's office at 110 Front Street. He was born January 13th, 1861 and is eighteen years of age. In the year 1868, at the age of seven, he entered the lowest class in Primary School No. 37, and remained there until 1870, when he entered Grammar School No. 86, remaining there until 1873, when he graduated with honors.

We next find him employed in a law office, where he remained until the year 1874, when he resigned this position to accept a clerkship with the "Myer Engine Company," Courtlandt Street, remaining there until they failed in September, 1875. In December, 1875, he entered the services of the American District Telegraph Company as messenger. He performed the duties of messenger at their office at 1205 Broadway until the following March, 1876, when he was promoted as assistant clerk by the late Mr. J. S. Ashhurst, then Superintendent of the Messenger Department, for his attention and good conduct as messenger. In October, 1876, he was promoted to be chief clerk at the company's largest office, 6 Broad Street, remaining in this capacity until the following December, when he resigned his position as clerk to accept a managership at the new office, 110 Front Street, where he still holds the position.

EDWARD JOSEPH MITCHELL, MESSENGER-BOY OF THE AMERICAN DISTRICT TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

WANDERING WILLIE;
Or,
Lost in the Bush.

The Adventures of a Missionary's Son in the Wilds of Africa.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEADLY TREE.

THE discharge of the arrow caused Willie the liveliest apprehension, for his father and himself were unarmed, and the natives were excellent shots with a bow.

Fearing that they would be hit, he cried out to his father, telling him to hide behind a tree, which Mr. Hill proceeded to do, and succeeded in concealing himself before the native could do any harm.

Willie no sooner saw his father in safety than he imitated his example, and reflected upon the best course to adopt.

Up to the present time he had only seen one native; but it was probable that he had strayed in advance of his party, as the people seldom travel alone.

If so, he would soon be joined by others, and if Willie and his father did not surrender, they would undoubtedly be killed.

A small round stone lying at his feet attracted Willie's attention, and, remembering how David killed the giant Goliah, he wondered if he could not make a sling and use it as an offensive weapon.

When at home he had frequently killed chippies with a leathern belt and small stones.

Hastily tearing a long strip from the white cotton garment which he wore, he gathered up the two ends and placed the stone in the middle.

In order to find out the whereabouts of the native he would have to step from behind his place of concealment.

This would expose him to the flight of another arrow.

It was, however, necessary to run this risk, and he did not hesitate to do so.

Peeping from behind the tree he beheld the native standing in the same place, with his bow raised and an arrow fitted to the string.

He was evidently waiting for an opportunity, which he guessed would be shortly afforded him.

Nor was he mistaken.

Willie's outstretched head afforded the tempting mark which he was expecting, and the twang of the bow-string announced the departure of the arrow.

Willie saw the arrow coming and cleverly darted behind the tree, again reappearing on the other side, and before the African could fit another shaft to his bow he slung the stone.

Whether it was by luck or skill we will not pretend to say, but the stone struck the native on the side of the head.

He uttered a loud cry, threw up his arms and fell on his back, remaining motionless as if dead.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Willie, adding, "Father, where are you?"

Mr. Hill emerged from his hiding-place.

"Where is the Philistine?" asked Mr. Hill.

Willie pointed to the prostrate body.

"How did you succeed in felling him to the ground?" continued his father.

"The Lord gave me an idea and strengthened my hand. I made a sling and hit him with a stone."

"Wonderful! Let us pursue our way before any of his companions, if he has any, have time to arrive."

"I'll take his bow and arrows," said Willie. "We may be able to kill something to eat, as well as defend ourselves from any further attacks."

"That is so. I, myself, begin to hanker after the fleshpots of Egypt," replied Mr. Hill, with a smile.

Willie approached the African and picked up his bow and quiver, containing a dozen or more of arrows.

No blood flowed from the discomfited native, but a bluish mark on the right temple showed where the deadly missile had struck him.

From his appearance, and the way in which he wore his loin-cloth, Willie judged that he was neither a Kasonga nor a Matama.

He belonged, as well as he was able to estimate, to the predatory Warua tribe, those pestilent slave-dealers who had captured Birdie, and were always on the lookout for the means of carrying on their accursed traffic.

Scarcely had Willie and his father started to continue their journey than they were confronted by half a dozen armed warriors, who sprang out of the bush.

Holding up their shields and brandishing their spears, they uttered their loud and fearful warcries.

These rang in Mr. Hill's ears with a terrible cadence, for they were a death-knell to his newly-born hopes of liberty.

Probably the new-comers were friends of the dead African, who had become separated from them.

The despairing cry he uttered when struck by the stone might have given them an indication of his position.

At all events, they came up just in time.

Willie bent his bow.

"Stop!" said Mr. Hill. "The odds are against us. Do not shoot. Let us not provoke these truculent and savage men."

With a sigh Willie cast the bow and arrows on the ground in token of surrender.

The Warna then approached them, and binding their hands behind their backs, fastened them together.

They carefully examined the injured man, uttering expressive grunts and pointing to Willie.

Had the captives not possessed a certain value as slaves, it is not at all unlikely they would have been killed, to exact summary vengeance for the African's death.

But the Warna were a prudent people, who lived near the coast.

They took much gold-dust, palm-oil and ivory home with them after their raids into the interior.

These things they sold to white traders, buying cloth and beads for their women, and such luxuries as whisky and tobacco for themselves.

Not staying to bury their friend, they abandoned his body to the vulture and the wolf, at once continuing their journey.

From some words which they had let fall Willie gathered that they belonged to a large party, which had encountered the army of King Urinza and been badly beaten.

The result was that they were scattered, and these men were about to return home.

"They will sell us to some tribe on the way," said Willie.

"Yes, my son," replied Mr. Hill, in despair. "The hand of the Lord sets heavily upon us, and the iron of captivity will eat once more into our souls."

"Cheer up, father!" exclaimed Willie.

"I try to, but I am old and broken down."

"We have life, and we are together," Willie said.

"That is true, but they may sell us separately, and it would break my heart to lose you, after all your heroic sufferings in searching for me."

"Let us hope for the best. I'm an American boy, and I'm not going to give up the ship."

Mr. Hill tried to smile his encouragement at this sentiment, of which he greatly approved, but he could not. His heart was too full, and the tears chased one another down his cheeks.

At nightfall they came to a spot which was ornamented by three large trees with dark green foliage, the leaves being broad and smooth.

An antelope had been shot a little while before, and the slave-dealers determined to rest there.

Wood was collected, the antelope was cut up, and when a good fire was made dinner was cooked.

After dinner the slave-dealers, who were tired with their days' march, threw themselves down under the trees.

Willie and his father attempted to do the same thing, but they were driven back with curses.

"This is no place for you," said the leader of the Warna. "Lie on the plain."

They accordingly did not sleep under the heavy shade-trees.

Willie thought it odd that there were no birds on the branches, and that no grass grew under or near the trees.

It was also remarkable that a quantity of bones, which looked like human remains, were scattered on the ground.

At length night fell and all went to sleep.

In the morning Willie woke up bright and early. His movement aroused his father.

"Time to get up!" exclaimed Mr. Hill, rubbing his eyes.

"Yes, sir. It is daylight."

"My limbs ache."

"So do mine, but I have got so used to camping out that I care little where I sleep."

"Ah," said Mr. Hill, with a heavy sigh, "your bones are younger than mine."

They looked toward their captors, and perceived that none of them were moving.

"Our bosses are sleeping longer than is usual with them," observed Willie.

"Yes, that is strange. They are generally wide awake as soon as the sun shines."

"Let us take another nap. It is no use getting up till they rouse us, and I'm sure we are not so strong as to be able to do without any little sleep we can get."

"That's so. Sleep, my boy, if you can."

"And you, father dear."

"My mind is too full of misery to let me sleep," replied Mr. Hill, sadly. "I only close my eyes when exhausted nature requires it."

As they were bound together, he was obliged to lie down with his son, and Willie was soon fast asleep.

"Poor boy!" murmured Mr. Hill, looking affectionately at his fair face, now somewhat bronzed with the sun. "He brought all this trouble on himself through his devotion to me."

Two more hours passed, and yet the slave-dealers did not awake.

There was something very remarkable about this.

"Willie?" said Mr. Hill, shaking him.

"Yes, father," replied Willie, rubbing his eyes.

"Wake up."

"Oh, I had such a happy dream!" answered Willie. "I thought we were in our pleasant home at Manasquan, and dear mother was with us."

"Don't talk of your sainted mother. It unmans me."

"She is with the angels, father."

"Would I were with them, too."

It was the first time Mr. Hill had murmured, and he speedily corrected himself.

"I did not mean that," he added. "Life has few charms for me now, but God's will, not mine, be done."

They both got up, and made bold enough to approach their captors.

A pungent odor assailed their nostrils as they drew near the tree under which they were lying.

After gazing at the apparently inanimate bodies of the Warna for a few minutes Mr. Hill said:

"This is something more than sleep."

"How, father?" asked Willie.

"They are dead."

"Dead!"

"Look at their pallid faces, regard their rigid forms," continued Mr. Hill; "what other conclusion can we come to?"

"But what could have killed them?"

Mr. Hill looked up at the tree.

"You have heard of the deadly upas?" he said.

"Yes, but I have always regarded it as a fable."

"It is not a fable. I have been some years among the natives of Africa, and they all speak of a noisome tree, to sleep under which is death."

"Is it possible?"

"Let us test it," said Mr. Hill. "Now we are unobserved, you can bite asunder the bonds that confine my hands."

"Yes."

"Then I will liberate you."

Willie's teeth were sharp, and in about five minutes he had freed his father, who performed a similar office for him.

Advancing nearer to the slave-dealers, they felt of their bodies, and found they were stiff and cold.

It was indeed the deadly upas-tree under which they had taken their last long sleep.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEFEAT OF KASONGA.

WHEN Mr. Hill and Willie were satisfied that the slave-dealers had really been killed by the poisonous exhalations of the upas-tree, their joy knew no bounds.

"My dear boy," said Mr. Hill, "let us thank the Lord that we are free once more."

"Yes, but for how long?" asked Willie. "The country is full of depredating parties, and we cannot tell when we shall fall into bad hands again."

"If we could only meet with Urinza."

"Ah," continued Willie, "with him we should be safe. Let us take the points of the compass."

He regarded the sun's altitude, and saw that it was rising slowly from the east.

"Now," he added, stretching out his hand, "that direction should be east. I left Urinza in a northwesterly direction. Are you satisfied to trust yourself to my guidance?"

"Certainly I am."

"Let us eat some of this ant-lope-meat and make a start."

They kindled a fire by rubbing some dry sticks together and throwing leaves and grass on them. The meat being cooked, they ate heartily, and finding a spring of water, quenched their thirst.

"I'm good for a twenty-mile tramp," said Willie.

"I feel stronger," replied Mr. Hill, "and should be perfectly happy if it was not for the heat of the sun."

In fact, the tropical heat they had to walk under was most trying, and it was only by wetting leaves and grass and placing them on their heads that they avoided sunstroke.

A walk of ten miles brought them to an open section of the country.

In the distance they saw large bodies of men rushing about in a frantic manner.

Loud cries arose on the sultry air.

Spears were freely thrown, and it was apparent at a glance that a battle was in progress.

Could it be that they had approached the contending post of King Urinza and Sankorra?

Was it Matama against Kasonga?

Willie inclined to this belief, and so did his father.

"I wonder which will win?" exclaimed Willie.

"Oh, if I had a spear or a sword, wouldn't I go in and fight?"

"Best keep out of it," answered Mr. Hill.

They had just emerged from a forest and were standing on the edge watching the battle.

All day long the fight was stubbornly contested.

At length one party seemed to be gaining the advantage, for those in the front of them gave way and began to run in all directions.

"It's over," exclaimed Willie. "Can you climb, father?"

"What for?"

"We must get up a tree. The defeated army will be sure to seek the shelter of this wood, and if they see us they will either kill or make us prisoners."

"That is so."

"Come," added Willie; "here is a leafy tree with lots of low branches. We could not find one easier to climb up."

He helped his father and then followed himself.

They selected a comfortable branch to sit on about ten feet from the ground, and while they could see out on the plain, they were securely hidden from view themselves.

Willie was perfectly right in his conjecture, for the beaten savages made all haste to reach the wood. They were hotly pursued by their victorious enemies, and the carnage attendant upon the rout was terrible.

Soon the plain was covered with the bodies of the slain, and the groans of the dying were caught up by the freshening breeze and carried afar off.

Willie quickly perceived that the fugitives were Kasongas.

"Oh, father!" he cried, "it is Sankorra's men who are running away."

"That is good news. Are you quite sure?"

"Perfectly. I know their way of dressing their hair. Look how they throw away their shields and spears. What a beating they must have had!"

"It is a victory for civilization and religion," said Mr. Hill.

"Yes, indeed. If I only knew where my dear Birdie Merlin is I should be perfectly happy."

"Perhaps she is nearer than we think."

"I hope so."

"Are you certain she was captured by the Warna?"

"By whom else? The Warna were seen in the vicinity, and no one else could have taken her."

Mr. Hill was thoughtful for a moment.

"I know for a fact," he said, "that these people have extensive dealings with Sankorra. He has bought as many as a hundred slaves at one time for a sacrifice."

"If she is in Kasonga land," replied Willie, "and still alive, we shall find her."

"Poor little Birdie," continued Mr. Hill; "I remember her well. She was always a good girl, and there was not a smarter one in the Sunday-school at Manasquan."

"If you knew how she loved me, father!"

"She will make you a good wife, my dear boy, and I only hope I shall live to see it. What happiness it would be to me to go back to the old homestead in Jersey and marry you two! You would live with me, and——"

The old gentleman broke off in the midst of his mind-picture, and stopped abruptly.

"I am stupid to dream like this," he added.

"Why, father?"

"What is the use of building castles in the air?"

"It is a dream that may be realized."

Mr. Hill shook his head negatively.

"I cannot tell. Here we are in the wilds of Africa, holding our lives in our hands, and God only knows if we shall ever get home again. If we do, we have nothing to live upon."

He sighed deeply.

"Father," said Willie, earnestly, "be comforted. King Urinza and his Queen Jumah like me. They have promised me gold-dust and ivory. We shall go home rich. Besides, I am young; I can work."

"Yes," said Mr. Hill.

"Everything is possible to a youth of my age, if his principles are good and he enjoys his health."

"True. I see you do not forget my teaching."

"You have told me so repeatedly."

"I have, and believe me, my dear boy," answered the missionary, fondly, "I am bold enough to hope that you will become President of the United States some day."

Willie laughed at this.

"Hurrah for the Fourth of July!" he said. "There is nothing like looking up."

"It is only the beasts of the field that look down," said his father.

"Thank Heaven, my instincts do not run that way!"

"I know it!" exclaimed Mr. Hill. "You are a boy after my own heart, and I like your ambition. Remember the old saying, 'Grasp at a coat made of cloth-of-gold and you may at least get a sleeve of it.'"

At this moment a body of men came toward the wood. They were closely followed by a superior force, and being pushed hard, they stopped and made a last stand.

The fighting that ensued was very severe.

What made the contest all the more interesting was that the pursuing force consisted of women.

These were the famous Amazons of Matama, commanded by Queen Jumah in person.

Willie recognized in the retreating force the presence of a distinguished person.

From the deference and respect which was paid him he did not doubt that he was the King of Kasonga land.

In this belief he was not mistaken.

It was in reality Sankorra!

The Amazons fought with such determination that they speedily dispersed the disheartened Kasongas.

Wearied with the day's fighting, and seeing that the day was hopelessly lost, they scattered and ran.

Sankorra was faint with loss of blood, for he had received more than one wound.

Scarcely could he drag his weary limbs into the wood.

He passed under the tree where the missionary and his son were hiding.

"Stay where you are, father," cried Willie.

"What for?" inquired Mr. Hill.

"Don't you see some big game here?"

"Where?"

"That must be the king, from his dress."

"Well?"

"I am going to beg him."

"Take care."

Willie nodded his head confidently, as much as to say, "You don't catch this child napping," and descending a few branches, dropped lightly to the ground.

Sankorra was but a few feet from him, and started at the apparition which seemed to come from the clouds.

"Ugh!" he grunted.

"It isn't you, it's I," replied Willie.

Sankorra raised his spear to strike the bold intruder, but Willie dashed it on one side, and striking him in the face in true American fashion, felled him to the ground.

Then he seized him by the throat with one hand, picked up the spear with the other, and threatened him with the point if he moved.

The next moment the Queen of the Matamas, followed by her Amazons, dashed into the wood.

Jumah saw the situation at a glance.

She recognized Willie, and saw that he had conquered Sankorra.

"Ha!" she cried: "you here?"

"Yes," replied Willie. "I'm always on hand when I'm wanted. If I was not, I shouldn't be a Yankee."

"But I thought you were captured."

"So I was."

"They boasted, so I was told, that they had fed the sacred serpent with you."

"They tried to, but I escaped."

"And you have caught the king?"

"That is what I imagined myself," replied Willie. The Amazons had either halted at a respectful distance or gone on in pursuit of their enemy.

A certain number always attended the queen.

They were her majesty's body-guard.

Sankorra looked up despairingly in the queen's face.

There was no pity there.

He read his doom at a glance.

The kind of mercy that he had meted out to the unfortunate captives who fell into his hands was now about to be given to him.

He was an African, however, and he knew how to die.

These singular people never cringe and beg for life.

It was retributive justice.

Those who live by the sword must expect to die by the sword; that was all there was about it.

"Give me that spear," said Jumah.

"What for?" asked Willie.

"To kill him."

"Kill him?"

"Yes; he is my enemy. have defeated him, and I scattered his troops. Would he have spared me if he had been successful?"

"I guess not," answered Willie. "But we are taught to forgive our enemies."

"I shall never learn that."

"Why?"

"Because it is not human nature."

"I know it," said Willie; "yet it is divine."

Queen Jumah snatched the spear from his hand.

"Stand away!" she exclaimed.

Knowing her fierce and determined disposition, he gave up the commanding position he had occupied.

Sankorra did not move.

He knew his last hour had come.

The spear was raised, its point descended and entered the breast of the fallen monarch.

Such was the force with which it was wielded that the point went through the body and penetrated to the earth.

There was a convulsive movement, a gasp, a death-rattle, and all was over.

King Sankorra had ceased to exist.

He who had in his lifetime condemned so many to death had met the fate he so richly merited.

Willie would have saved him if he had been able. As it was, his efforts were unavailing.

"The battle is over," exclaimed the queen. "Sound the horn for our people to assemble. Kasonga is ours. We will sleep there to-night."

A cheer arose from the assembled Amazons.

"Let some of you convey Sankorra's body to Kasonga. It shall be buried with the usual honors to-morrow."

The queen now bestowed her attention upon Willie.

"We will soon find your father," she said.

"He is already found," replied Willie.

"How?"

"I discovered him."

"You?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

Willie related his adventures, and while he was doing so his father descended from the tree and was warmly welcomed by Jumah.

"Your God protects you," she said, "and I mean to be a Christian."

At this declaration Mr. Hill was delighted.

"If that is so," he exclaimed, "I thank the Lord for letting me live to see this day."

"I mean it," she continued. "A religion like yours, which induces a son to run every risk to find his father, must be a good one. It shall be the faith of Matama, and if any one objects to it, he or she shall be put to death."

"Oh, no; that would be wrong," said Mr. Hill. "We Christians do not propagate our gospel by persecution."

"Then the objectors shall be banished."

"That is better."

"The idols shall be overthrown."

"Yes."

"And we will burn the Fetichmen."

"No, no. We must not burn any one," replied Mr. Hill.

"Well, I will leave it all to you."

"To me?"

"Yes."

"You shall be the head magician in future, and everything you do will meet with my approval."

"And King Urinza?"

"Bah! he is my husband. What I wish to be done he has to do," she replied, in a tone which showed that she did not think much of her husband's authority.

There was no opposition to the march of the victorious army to the City of Kasonga.

The soldiers had thrown away their arms and scattered in all directions.

Not even in an isolated instance did a band collect together to stop the advance of Urinza.

The citizens in many cases fled, but Urinza sent word that no lives would be taken, and the people welcomed him with acclamation.

Benguela and the priests made their escape, for they knew they could expect no mercy.

That evening Urinza and his Queen Jumah were installed in the place of the deposed Sankorra.

Kasonga land was theirs.

Messengers came in from all parts of the country to do homage and bring tribute.

Willie and Mr. Hill were honored guests of the conquerors, and it was chiefly owing to their influence that the victory was not disgraced by scenes of bloodshed.

On the following day Willie began to make inquiries for Birdie.

His care was rewarded by some news which excercised him greatly.

A high official attached to the palace of the late king volunteered the information that a person resembling the description of Birdie had been sold to the king by Warna.

Willie traced this person to the Tower in which Queen Taborah had been murdered.

The attendants in the Tower told Willie that on the day the king's army had been defeated Benguela had come hurriedly to the prison, accompanied by several prisoners.

Birdie—or the captive supposed to be her—was taken out and carried away.

"In what direction did she go?" asked Willie.

"Toward the mountains," replied the attendant.

"What was she like?"

The attendant fully described her again.

"It must be Birdie," said Willie.

"Ask him if she ever prayed?" replied Mr. Hill.

"Oh, yes!" answered the attendant, who caught the question; "she was frequently on her knees, but she had no fetich, no charm, and never asked for an idol."

"To what did she pray?"

The man pointed to the sky.

"To something up there," he replied. "It was an invisible spirit."

Willie was satisfied.

"Father," he said, "a white girl who prayed in this way must be my own dear little Birdie, and I am going in search of her."

"I command your position," said Mr. Hill.

"Will you go with me?"

"If you wish it."

"I know you want rest, father," continued Willie; "but much as I love Birdie, I hate to be separated from you."

"Dear boy!" exclaimed the missionary, patting his head, while a benignant smile wreathed his face. "Just think of it," Willie went on; "we have been apart so long. We have gone through such a multitude of adventures. I saved myself and you, almost by a miracle. It was an interposition of Providence in our behalf, and if I let you out of my sight, something may happen which will part us for ever."

"I would go to the end of the world with you, Willie, but——"

"But what, father?"

"I doubt my strength."

"Ah! yes," said Willie, impulsively. "What a brute I am! Of course you are weak, and want rest."

"I have been starved, and my heart has been broken. It has been hard work, Willie, to keep body and soul together."

Willie regarded his father with anxious solicitude

"Pop!" he exclaimed, "you shall ride."

"Ride on what!—a rail?"

"No, indeed."

"What, then?"

"An elephant. King Urinza has an elephant he rides on, and he shall lend it to me."

"Suppose he refuses?"

"Then I will ask his wife, who is boss."

"You seem to have some influence over the queen."

"A little; she has taken a fancy to me."

Mr. Hill shook his head.

"I don't like that amazonian woman," he said. "She has a bad face. Beware of her."

"Why?"

"I do not know exactly why, but I don't like her; that is all."

"Why, father," replied Willie, "she is the best friend we have. It was she who made this war and beat the King of Kasonga land, all because I told her you were my father and I wanted to find you."

"She must have had some ulterior motive."

"Not at all."

"Call it caprice, then," said Mr. Hill. "I will not contradict you, although I know these savages so well that I am sure they never do anything without a motive."

Willie looked puzzled.

"What motive could she have in aiding me?" he asked.

"Does she love her husband?"

"Cares as much for him as she would for an old shoe, if she were one."

"Precisely."

"What do you mean?"

"There you are. The woman does not like her husband. She has, as you say, taken a fancy to you."

"Well?"

"The next thing will be that she will kill Urinza and marry you."

At this declaration Willie laughed aloud.

"Well, father, I did not think you were so silly as that," he replied.

"Why silly?" asked the missionary.

"Because I love Birdie Merlin better than I do my life."

"What of that?"

"Simply this: I would rather have ten years in the State's Prison than marry that horrid coffee-colored old hag."

"That makes no difference," said Mr. Hill.

"Doesn't it? I guess it does."

"Willie," exclaimed his father, "you don't want to marry her, we admit that, but she wants to marry you, and having the power in her own hands, she will make you do it."

"I don't see it," replied Willie.

"It is transparent. She made war for your sake; she is willing to give up her religion for your sake and become a Christian."

"Yes."

"And is all this done for nothing?"

"I presume so."

"If it is," replied Mr. Hill, "I know nothing of the native character, and I have lived among them all these years without learning anything."

Willie regarded his father fixedly.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Just this: If you ask the queen for an elephant for me to go on an expedition with you after Birdie Merlin, you won't get it."

"Think not?"

"I am sure of it; and more than that, we shall not be allowed to go. She will hate the name of a rival, and if you let her know you like Birdie Queen Jumsh will be your sworn enemy."

"In that case we ought to start off for the mountains without saying a word."

"Exactly."

"Let us go at once."

"Pause a moment," said Mr. Hill. "There is another consideration which you have forgotten."

"What is that?" queried Willie.

"Benguela has a party of priests with him. We are but two against we know not how many."

"Oh, pshaw! I could fight a dozen."

Mr. Hill sighed deeply.

"I'm afraid my fighting days are over," he said. "For I do not feel as if I could wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon against the smallest specimen of those Amalokites."

Willie did not know what to do.

He owned to himself that it was unkind to insist upon his father, in his weak state, accompanying him in his wanderings after Birdie.

Yet he could not desert her in her distress.

"Father," he said, "I am half distracted. What shall I do?"

"Follow the dictates of your conscience."

"Then I will go after Birdie."

"You are right, and I will accompany you as long as my limbs will support my body," replied Mr. Hill.

Willie wrung his father's hand heartily, and they started in the direction of the mountains.

Toward nightfall they came to a place where an encampment had been recently held.

Rudely scratched upon the sand was the name of Birdie.

The letters had been traced with a stick rudely and abstractedly.

Willie was much excited.

"Look, father!" he cried.

Mr. Hill did so.

"We are on the right track, my boy," he exclaimed.

They determined to camp there that night and follow the trail the next morning.

[To be continued.]

"Wandering Willie" was commenced in No. 654.

THREE BOYS.

A Story of a High School.

By WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"MR. SLIGO," said his little wife to him, that evening, "those boys——"

"What boys, my dear?"

"That board with the Widow Porrance. Have they been invited to the donation?"

"I don't know. She ought to bring them."

"She won't, then. I'll see to it myself. They're strangers, and they'd never come unless they were asked."

"Most of the young folks here 'll be older than they are."

"Husband, boys of that age feel as old as you do. And those three are no common boys, I can tell you."

Down at the tavern, at the same time, quite a crowd of fellows were busily discussing "the first buck of the season," whose haunches hung over the bar, surrounded by the antlers, and labeled, "For the Donation Party."

Prominent among the talkers was Pat Nolan's friend, the stage-driver, "Dennis Mullaly, from Limerick," fit to burst with pride over the fact that "a bit of a red-headed Irish boy" had helped bring in such a trophy as that.

Pat was as Irish to him, in spite of the fact that he was born in the old Fourth Ward of New York. In fact, that was just as good as Limerick, so far as nationality went.

As for the boys themselves, their supper had not been a bad one, but they found room left within them for one of those mince-pies. That helped them dream of endless hunts and of stags with impossible antlers by their valiant hands brought down.

At the next morning's breakfast-table it was made to appear not only that sunfish mate "a good brile," but that a marvelous number of them can be eaten by one middle-aged woman, one young one, and the three gentlemen who caught the fish.

"Plenty of 'em left for dinner—mostly the big ones," said Mrs. Porrance, and her boarders went to church wondering what they would do with fish and venison at the same meal. Before they returned they had been cornered on the green by Mrs. Sligo and cordially invited to the Monday evening's entertainment.

They had also received a most encouraging bow and smile from that excellent woman, Mrs. Belden.

"We'll send her some more fish some day," remarked Sol Rogers.

The dinner question continued to puzzle them, however, until they got into the house.

House, indeed! but what a house!

For once it could fairly be called a full house, and the three made the best of their way to their own room.

"That's it," said Van, "but I don't quite see through it."

"Don't you, then?" said Sol. "Well; I do, then. She doesn't often have mince-pies, venison, fish and all that, at once, and no cost but the cooking. So she's invited all the country people she had room for. They're awful eaters."

"Queer looking lot."

"Farmers' wives and sisters and aunts. Mighty few men, I notice. One good thing, they'll all feel bound to send her in something nice before Christmas."

"Something she can't sell?"

"Something good to eat. It's a way they have up here."

"We'll take care of all they send. But, Sol, there's fun coming."

So there was, but just then the most noticeable thing in the house was the beautiful odor from the kitchen, which was creeping all over it and helping every one who had a good nose to get hungry.

"She's a up-top cook," said Sol.

Dinner was a trifle late, to the great advantage of all appetites, but at last the bell rung.

What a crowd! and how gracefully Almira introduced to them her mother's two boarders while poor Pat was helping to bring in the dinner!

That was nothing, for even some of the guests had helped the widow with her extra work.

No style or nonsense among them; not even in managing the table, for fish and all came on together.

There was one dangerous point, while a gray-headed elder was saying grace, but his wife sat next to him and pinched him to stop before things could cool materially.

It was a good dinner, and there was an abundance of it, for Mrs. Porrance had extravagantly added a fat chicken, and all concerned looked beamingly at the widow and wished in their hearts she would remember to ask them every Sunday they came to town.

Such dinners have a great effect on church-going in country villages, and there ought to be a "society" to cultivate them.

Mr. Sligo must have preached a remarkably good sermon that morning, for the old ladies all said so when they passed their plates a second time. Nevertheless, there was more silence than one would have looked for. It was the dinner did that.

Sol Rogers himself worked away quietly, until, at last, Miss Almira suddenly dropped her knife and fork, exclaiming:

"Mother, I declare!"

"What is it, Almira?"

"I forgot to warm the mince-pies."

"So did I, then. What a pity!"

"There it comes, Van," whispered Sol; "I knew it."

But a dozen voices were loudly protesting that mince pies were decidedly to be preferred cold, and they always eat them that way at home.

"Then I must, while we're clearing the table," you and Pat go down and bring them up."

Pat did not dare to look his friends in the face, as he silently followed the landlady's daughter, but Sol again whispered:

"Is his hair's turning red."

"Is yours coming gray?"

"No; but I'm a trifle chilly."

Almira took down cellar with her a stout wooden stool to stand on, while she should hand down the pies to Patrick from the shelf.

The light was dim and no candle was carried, so that the calamity came suddenly.

"Miss Almira, this 'ere plate's as empty as it was born."

"Empty? How can that be?"

"No pie," said Pat.

"Here's another——"

"That's as clean as if you'd washed it. Did you really ever have any pies up there?"

Almira was standing on tiptoe now, and craning her long neck forward. Her eyes were more accustomed to the light by this time, and in an instant she comprehended the full extent of the disaster which had befallen the dinner and the donation. That is, one of the other of them.

"Only part of 'em gone," she said, faintly, after one loud, shrill cry of astonishment and alarm.

"But who could have taken them?"

"Somebody stolen 'em, I guess," said Pat.

That cry had been heard in the dining-room, however, and Mrs. Porrance sprang to the head of the cellar-stairs, followed by three or four of her old lady-friends.

"She's fell down."

"Hurt herself?"

"The stool give way?"

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Porrance; "something's gone wrong with the pies."

Sol and Van sat calmly in their chairs, awaiting the inevitable result.

Almira met her mother half-way with her report, but the widow passed on down and did not pause until she had made a minute examination of the cellar.

"No," she said to herself, "nobody got in through that outside door, for the bolt's in its place, all right. No more could they have got in through the house.

I give it up. It makes me shiver all over. Those boys! No, they just couldn't have done it, and that's all."

Nevertheless, the only thing left for her to tell her friends was that her pies had been stolen.

"I'll have some for you next Sunday, though," she added, desperately, "and I want you all to be here."

"Mrs. Porrance," remarked Van, with easy politeness, "I promise you, Sol and Pat and I will do our part."

That was a splendid promise.

Suspect those boys of the pies, after that? No, indeed.

The widow's face wore a smile of positive gratitude while her guests loudly protested that they had one and all eaten so much already that they had no room for pie.

"It was the solemn truth, too," said Sol to Van, after they got up-stairs.

"Now let's us warm up one of those pies and see what we can do with it."

They did with it, helped a little by Pat Nolan; but the latter told them the pie business was weighing heavily on the mind of the widow.

CHAPTER XXX.

IT was just as well for Mrs. Porrance and her peace of mind, and for the comfort of the nearly distracted Almira, that several of those Sunday guests remained over, with a view of attending the Sligo donation party.

Both mother and daughter were thereby supplied with talk and company, so that the blow they had received was lightened of some of its effects.

To tell the truth, the widow regarded herself, and was looked upon by others, as a leading member of that church, and she felt in no small degree responsible for its well being. No other woman or man was better posted on its history, its present condition, and in the average conduct of its brethren and sisters. She was ready to listen calmly to all the news that came concerning any of them.

It is not to be supposed that she had forgotten her boarders in that connection, but the experiment of inviting academy boys to donations, and that sort of thing, was one that had been much tried and very thoroughly given up.

This did not include the full-grown students of either sex, if they amounted to anything socially, but "boys were boys," and they had proved it so often that even Mrs. Porrance did not dare step over the rule.

She might have asked Van, but how then could she omit Sol? And if Sol, why not Pat Nolan?

She thought it all over, and would have had no difficulty about her decision if it had not been for that haunch of venison.

The deer-meat troubled her, and there is no telling what the result might have been but for the loss of her pies and the coming of her guests.

Both together drove the invitation business out of her mind until it was too late.

She was rejoiced over her inability to deliver her full number of pies, for her reputation as a cook was at stake, and she well knew the capacity of her neighbors for making remarks.

There would be a crowd, she knew that, and a hungry one, likely to count everything that came, to the last pie and doughnut.

There were several other congregations in Bunkerville, but none of them were too narrow to send their ministers and some of their deacons to any place where there was to be plenty to eat. They were ever ready to help the supplies.

It was therefore a good thing that the Sligo parsonage, though only a story and a half high, had a good deal of room on the ground floor. To be sure, it was only half finished, but that was a fault which could be remedied for the occasion, as Pat Nolan found after school that Monday.

"They'll all be able to sit down, boys," he remarked to his friends, "and the tables'll be everywhere."

The only really elegant article of furniture possessed by little Mrs. Sligo was her piano, and that was a treasure she rarely opened before company, although both she and her husband had been called "musical" before they had so many children and so much church on their hands.

"Boys," said Sol, as they walked across the green that afternoon, "we must make a ten-strike to-night. How'll we work it?"

"They've got a piano," said Pat. "I saw it this morning."

"Pat, can you sing?" asked Van.

"Deed and I can. Something they never heard."

"What's that?"

"Irish, then. The real old sort. And three or four Dutch songs besides."

"And I can get off French and Italian. Some of it I don't quite understand myself, but I can sing it."

"He can play the piano, too," said Sol; "but what can I do? I've no more music than a pump."

"You can stand by and see fair play," laughed Van.

Little he knew how important a matter that might be, for no one had told him—how should they?—that Mr. Sligo had formerly been pastor of a church in which Mrs. Hinckley was a member, and that the good, soft-hearted man had invited the two boys, for their mother's sake.

"We'll work it, then," said Van, "if we can only overcome our bashfulness."

"I can help you there," remarked Sol Rogers, with the air of a man who had suddenly discovered precisely what he was good for.

The supper at Mrs. Porrance's was a little "thin" that day; but that was of small consequence, considering what was coming.

All the people who were bound for the donation ate light suppers, as a matter of course.

Afterward Sol and Van strolled down to the tavern to take a look at that haunch of venison before it was sent over, and to bring home the antlers.

Mrs. Porrance had errands for Pat. These could not last for ever, and by-and-by he was able to join his friends and get their help in dressing for the evening.

Never in all his life had he been in such an excitement, but he concealed it heroically.

It was to be his first social appearance as "a gentleman," and he was already thinking of the account he would send of it to his mother and Mr. Maguire.

As for Sol, it was an old story told over, and Van Rivington was not the sort of man to be startled by anything that could be sprung upon him out in Bunkerville.

There is something in being a city boy, after all, much as that poem has been disputed.

Still, there was any amount of blacking boots, and tying neckties, and brushing clothes and hair, and asking one another, "How'll that do, eh?" before the three felt themselves ready to face the music.

They had meant to be on hand early, but it was a good eight o'clock before Mrs. Porrance saw Parson Sligo shaking hands with them.

"That's a splendid haunch of venison, my dear young friends. You must tell me about the killing of it, Mrs. Sligo, they've come."

"And I was so afraid they would not," exclaimed the pallid little lady, as she bustled forward. "Now, do try and enjoy yourselves."

"Thank you," said Van; "I am quite sure we will."

"Mrs. Sligo," said Sol, "where did all those people come from? Did Mrs. Porrance borrow any of them?"

"No, you naughty boy. They're all good, real people, and we are very glad to see them."

Just then other guests demanded the attention of both her husband and herself; but Van Rivington had caught the expression of astonishment on Mrs. Porrance's face, and he sent a low bow to her clear across the room. A cool hand was Van, and both Sol and Pat had taken their cue from him.

"We must back him right through," said Sol. "You wouldn't go back on a captain like that, would you, Patrick Nolan?"

"Is it go back on him? Wouldn't I stale the pians if he said it? Wait, now, and see what he'll do next."

Miss Almira was just then at the piano, and to Sol's astonishment the intellectual editor of the Bunkerville Clarion was at her side.

"You forget," said Van, "he printed her poetry last week and gave her a puff. She thinks he's a genius now. But who ever thought she knew enough to play so badly as that? It isn't everybody would dare to."

"Rush, she's getting up, and they're pulling forward Mrs. Sligo. Let's see how she does it."

"Come on, Sol. Come, Pat. We must stand by her. She's half-scared to death."

Mrs. Porrance would have said "The impudent young scamps!" if she had overheard them, but Mrs. Sligo was really not a bad performer, and she had to plead her other duties quite firmly in order to get away at the end of her piece.

Mrs. Porrance herself had played landlady and hostess in one from the beginning of the evening, so that the minister's wife would not have been much missed, especially as everybody was eating who could get at the tables, or had not already had all they could stow away.

Mrs. Belden was there, and had thanked the widow again for "those beautiful fish," but she was now close at Van Rivington's elbow.

"Do you not play? I'm quite sure you do."

"Indeed, Mrs. Belden——"

"Sit right down. I insist upon it. Give us something we never heard before."

Van had not the slightest intention of resisting, and in a moment more he was running his fingers over the keys, hunting for an accompaniment for what he knew was coming from Pat Nolan.

"Now, Pat, will that do?"

"Start it. I'll run the ri-k."

Pat's voice had a tremor in it when he began, but it was a sweet one, and he was brimful of the fun of the thing.

Van plunged away for dear life at the accompaniment, and the way the crowd began to pack around that piano threatened to crush the inside people.

"What can it be?" said Mrs. Sligo.

"Italian, of course," said Almira.

"Scarcely that, but it's not German."

"Never heard it before," said the minister himself. "There, now, that's German. How well he sings!"

Mrs. Porrance had felt the color rising to her face when her boarders took possession of the piano.

That had been with vexation, but now she was as redly flushed with pride, and looked around her, as much as to say:

"Do you hear that? Those boys board with me. And it was they that killed the buck."

Great was the curiosity and excitement, for now Van himself struck in with a French air, in the chorus of which Pat helped him. Then a brief dose of Italian opera was thrown in, then something else, everything by turns, and nothing long, till Pat got back to his Irish, and Sol was ready to burst, with an envious wish that he could sing.

The applause was almost continuous, and the only people who did not join in it were Bob and Joe Hinckley, who had been drawn out of the supper-room by the strange music and Doctor Betts himself.

The former were whispering together in a way that boded no good, but the academy principal was standing dignifiedly in a corner, muttering to himself:

"I've had a good many boys at Bunker Academy, and before ever I came here, but I never got hold of such a lot as that. Yes, they could have managed the hornet affair. If they couldn't, nobody could. I'll get at the bottom of it yet. Hello!"

The last exclamation was called forth by an operation performed by Bob Hinckley, and Doctor Betts quickly added:

"Whatever it was Sol Rogers was too sharp for them. I must keep my eyes open. There'll something come of it before the evening's over."

Sol Rogers had indeed been on guard, with a pair of eyes in his head that not a great many things were likely to escape. Least of all, anything attempted by Bob or Joe, or any of their set.

"It was well we invited them," said Mrs. Sligo to her husband.

"The best thing of the evening, by all odds. But they must have some supper."

That was kind of him, and the boys fully appreciated it. Not only they were hungry, but they had about sung themselves out for that one pull.

Bitterer and bitterer grew the jealousy of Bob and Joe Hinckley, and they followed their intended victims into the supper-room with an ill-concealed chuckle that did not escape the eyes of Doctor Betts.

"Mischief coming, but I can't see what."

The supper-room was pretty warm, but there was not so great a crowd in it just now, and people could see what other people were doing.

Most were eating.

Mrs. Porrance's three boarders were bountifully helped to slices of their own venison, and they wondered if she could really have done any better by it than the cook at the tavern.

It was simply "prime."

Coffee, mince-pie, pumpkin-pie, any other kind of pie; doughnuts, cold fowl, there was no denying that the Bunkerville neighbors had dealt liberally with Parson Sligo's donation. No, nor that Van and his two friends did justice to the good things placed before them.

"Joe," said Bob Hinckley, at last, "Sol Rogers is wiping his face."

"We've got 'em, then. But ain't I warm!"

"So am I. There's Van; Pat, too. They'll be a nice looking lot."

Very clean and white were the pocket-handkerchiefs produced and used by the three friends, and Bob and Joe looked on with suppressed chuckles, as if waiting for something which must shortly come.

They waited and waited.

"Bob," said Joe, "what's the matter?"

"Mistake, somewhere."

And he wiped his own perspiring forehead vigorously as he said it.

"Joe Hinckley!"

"Bob! Gracious!"

"Master Hinckley," suddenly broke in the deep, sonorous voice of Doctor Betts, "what have you and your brother been doing to your faces? It is disgraceful."

"Look at 'em, Van," remarked Sol, across the table. "That's the sort of trap they laid for us."

"Powdered nutgalls, and all that sort of thing. I understand it."

"Made zebras of themselves," said Pat Nolan.

"Oh, but ain't they streaked! Will it come off?"

"Not easy."

But Doctor Betts understood the whole matter now, and the two brothers were hurried out of the house with a flea in their ears, and an appointment for the next morning at the house of the academy principal.

Such a little incident as that scarcely made a ripple on the busy surface of the donation party,

and before long Pat and Van, with Sol to "encourage" them, as he called it, were dragged back to the piano.

Take it all in all, deer-meat, singing, Sol's tun, Van's good looks, Pat Nolan's red hair, and that evening was a species of triumphs for Mrs. Porrance's boarders.

The good lady herself kept as near them as she well could, and Miss Almira found her-self so far gone, before she knew it, that she actually smiled on Patrick.

"Arrah," said he to himself, "what would she and her mother be looking if they knew about the pies? And me own dear mother! Wouldn't I like to see her face come in at the door? This is better'n carrying home washin', or even groceries for old Maguire. It's glad I am to be rid of that same."

And yet he might have done worse than even that.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE two Hinckley boys had a tough time of it with Doctor Betts the next evening. There was no end to the good advice and sharp warnings he gave them.

They did not, however, put in an appearance at the academy again for two or three days more. There was too much of what Pat Nolan called "zebra" on their faces, in spite of all they could do to get it off. Their intended practical joke had been woefully turned against them.

It was just as well for their own comfort, perhaps, that they were not made witnesses of the sudden celebrity of the objects of their jealous dislike. Boys will make a hero out of almost anything, and the younger students of Bunkerville Academy were disposed to make all that was possible out of Sol and Van and Pat.

It was quite likely, as a consequence, that the three would scarcely be as popular with their seniors.

All the worse because the girl half of the academy seemed inclined to do any amount of smiling in the matter.

"Van," said Sol, "you get more than your share, but I've caught three girls smiling on me to-day, and I heard one of them say she likes red hair. That means Pat."

"Pat," said Van, "have your hair dyed at once."

"And lose all me good looks? What would me mother say?"

"Your mother? Do you suppose she wouldn't have you protect yourself? If you were as homely as Sol, now——"

"Is it me?" exclaimed Sol. "Van, I'm going to write some verses for the *Clarion*."

"You? Well, if you will I'll agree to read every word of them. What'll you write about?"

"Can't say just yet. I'm piling up a stock of rhymes before I begin. Must jingle, you know."

"That's so; but, boys, what on earth 'll we do next?"

"Study," said Sol, gravely.

"Of course we will," said Pat.

"Of course," said Van, "but we've managed to keep things prett-lively ever since we came, and I can't exactly make up my mind to be quiet."

"Quiet? Not a bit of it. Let's think it over."

"Anyhow, Sol, we'll have a hunt next Saturday if it doesn't rain. Let's try the Gap for a string of pigeons."

"And squirrels."

"And that makes me think," said Pat Nolan, "of a thing that happened to me day before yesterday——"

"And you never told us, Pat?"

"Oh, the donation and lots of other things drove it out of my head. I saw one of those Gap fellows."

"The squatters?"

"The cabin men that started our buck for us."

"Did you?" exclaimed Van. "Now, I want to hear it. Tell it, Pat."

And tell it he did, in his own way, in spite of numberless interruptions of all sorts, but the substance of it was this:

Pat had been out on one of his many errands for Mrs. Porrance when he had been hailed by a rough-looking fellow whom he recognized as one of the Gap squatters.

"Look a-here, youngster! you're just the boy I want."

"What for?"

"I want ye to run up for me into old Martin's and buy some things for me, while I stay here and mind my ponies. Tell ye somethin' worth while if ye will."

"All right. What do you want?"

"A can of rifle-powder and a can of shotgun-powder; caps and lead and shot. There's a list on 'em, all writ out. And there's the money—all silver. You kin count it; there's more'n enough."

Silver was just beginning to circulate again in Bunkerville, but it was not yet common to have so much of it offered at once.

Like all the rest that came, this was fresh and new—all in half-dollars and quarters. Old Martin filled the list and took the money without a word of comment, for the reputation Pat and his friends had earned as sportsmen had reached his ears in a somewhat exaggerated form.

There was a little odd change in Pat's hands when he went out with his purchases, and two or three of the half-dollars.

Very much to his astonishment his friend the squatter offered to let him keep it all; but he flatly refused, adding:

"You promised to tell me something."

"So I did. Well, there's lots o' pigeons in the woods by the Gap. Almost like a regular roost. You and your chums could knock over a heap of 'em. They ain't anywhere's nigh the house, though. Keep right on by the old road till you see the Gap, and then go up the slope to the right. You can't miss 'em. Don't come to the house. My chum's kinder cross-grained, and he don't want no visitors."

"We don't want to see him, that I know of," replied Pat; "but we'll come for those pigeons some day. I'm paid."

And so the squatter had jumped into his wagon and driven off, and Pat had gone about his other business.

It was queer, though, that he had failed to tell Van and Sol. It is just possible that the cause may not have been altogether forgetfulness.

CAMEL VS. ELEPHANT.—DESPERATE FIGHT BETWEEN A CAMEL AND AN ELEPHANT, IN VAN AMBURGH'S MENAGERIE.

Van evidently had some such idea in his mind, but he said nothing for a full minute.

Even Sol was silent.

"It was all in silver," said Pat. "Of course, I ought to have told you before."

"You said there was a big secret there."

"It's coming coming out now, I guess," said Van, as he opened his trunk and took out the little white thing he had picked up in the old log shanty the first time they visited it.

"This is Thursday night," he was saying, "and that was on Tuesday. We can't go till next Saturday, and it may rain——"

But at that moment there came an unusually loud knock at the front-door below. So loud it was plainly heard in their room.

"Somebody doesn't care a cent for his knuckles," said Sol.

"Almira's opening the door," remarked Pat, but the next thing he heard was his own name.

"Nolan—Patrick Nolan? Yes, he lives here."

"Is he in?"

"I think so."

"Will you tell him, ma'am, that Denis Mullaly and a friend of his would like to spake wid him?"

"Have him come right up here, Pat," exclaimed Van; "right to our room."

Pat was on the stairs in a twinkling, and before Miss Almira could make up her mind whether or not to object, Denis accepted the invitation, followed by a wiry, muscular, resolute-looking man, whom he introduced as:

"Me friend, Musther Murray, from New York;" adding to him, "I towld ye the three of 'em wud be togetther."

"I only want Pat," began Murray, but that young gentleman interrupted him with:

"Who is he, Denis? What does he want of me? He can speak it out before the boys."

"May be I won't, then."

"It's a quare piece of worruk," said Denis.

"Pat, me boy, did yez iver see that before?"

A couple of bright, new half-dollars lay in the palm of the stage-driver's outstretched hand.

"See 'em? Any fool knows what they are. The like of 'em's everywhere."

"Not just like 'em. Take another look."

"Give me one," remarked Van Rivington, as he helped himself. "I thought so. If the mold hadn't been broken it would have fitted exactly."

"Look here, I say!" almost excitedly exclaimed Murray; "where'd you get that? We've lit on it, Denis. They ain't the chaps that made it, neither."

"Are you a detective?" quietly asked Van.

"S'pose I am, what then?"

"What made you come to Pat with that money?"

"What made him?" exclaimed Denis. "Didn't I gift it of owld Martin, and didn't I have to say so wnin he spotted me wid the same? And when he kim to ask owld Martin, didn't the thafe go back on Pat and say he tuk it from him? A whole lot of it. The ownly way was to bring him straight here."

"It's all right," said Van. "We were talking it over when you came in. I guess Mr. Murray had better hear all about it."

"You're a cool hand for a young one," remarked the detective, as he hitched his chair a little nearer. "Whose son are you?"

Van told him, and there was plainly something reassuring in the information, for he nodded his head, as much as to say:

"That's all right. Your references'll do. Go on."

And go on he did, till Denis Mullaly sprang to his feet with a shout of:

"That clears the b'ys. Oh, Pat, but I'm glad o' that same. Ye're a credit to yer blood. It takes an Irish boy, after all."

"Sit down, Denis," said the detective. "Pat's all right, and so are the other boys. Old Martin'll keep still, and so must you. Boys, when can you make a trip to the Gap?"

"Saturday. Going to shoot some pigeons," said Van. "They know we're coming."

"Capital! They'll never suspect a thing if you have one more along with you. I'll get a gun of Martin. Just the thing. Is it all right?"

"We're willing," said Van.

"Best kind of luck," replied Murray. "You see, boys, I'm out after a good many more besides these two. If I spring a trap on them too sudden, you know, I'd only scare all the rest."

"Of course," remarked Sol Rogers. "There's no danger of our doing anything careless. I hope we can trust your prudence, Mr. Murray."

"And you're another cool hand," replied the detective.

Very little more remained to be said, and Denis went away with his friend, the detective, overjoyed at being able to assure old Martin that there was nothing wrong about Pat and his cronies.

"Mr. Rivington," said Mrs. Porrance, as he closed the front-door behind them, "what did those men want—the stage-driver and the other man?"

"Want? Oh, nothing at all, ma'am. The little fellow is to go hunting with us on Saturday, if it doesn't rain. We mean to show him some pigeons."

"Oh, that's all. Well, I hope you'll bring in a good string. I'll make a splendid pigeon pie if you do."

(To be continued.)

"Three Boys" was commenced in No. 803.

CAMEL VS. ELEPHANT.

THERE was a lively fight in Van Amburgh's Menagerie, at Pawling, N. Y., recently, between the elephant, Bolivar, which is said to be the largest ever imported, and the male camel. Charles Johnson, Bolivar's keeper, gives the following account of the battle:

"It was in the afternoon, and I had gone from the canvas under which we keep the animals into the circus for something. I had been gone a moment only when I heard the spectators in the menagerie canvas making a row as though panic-stricken. The under-keepers rushed into the circus canvas and shouted, 'Where's Johnson?' 'Where's Boyd?' Mr. Boyd is our local agent, and a man of experience with wild beasts, very cool, and of great bravery, as has been proved in a number of contests in which animals had to be conquered and subdued. I hurried into the menagerie, and there found the spectators in a state of panic. One of the under-keepers called out to me, 'That devil of a camel is at Bolivar, and one or the other will be killed.' Jumping inside the ropes, I found Bolivar and the camel locked together. In some unaccountable manner the camel got loose, and seized the elephant's trunk between his teeth, and then tried to strike him with his hoofs. Mr. Boyd and four under-keepers seized the camel, while I endeavored to impress upon Bolivar that help was at hand; but the old chap was so enraged by the excruciating pain that he trumpeted so loud I verily believe you could have heard him four miles. The camel clung to Bolivar's trunk with such tenacity that the four men could not pull him away until I had got a chain about his throat and choked him down. The wildest confusion reigned in the tent; women screamed and fainted, men yelled, and the other animals made their peculiar noises; but high above all the din was old Bolivar's trumpet, seemingly screaming, 'Take him off, and let me get just one crack at him.' The uproar was quieted as soon as we got the camel separated from the elephant and secured, but Bolivar was in a terrible plight."

Bolivar's trunk on each side, about a foot from the lower end, was frightfully lacerated, and for some days he could not use it, but had to be fed like a baby. It was at first feared that inflammation would set in and prove fatal, but Mr. Johnson says that that danger is passed, provided the warm weather continues and his patient doesn't catch cold.

"That camel," said Mr. Johnson, "is a perfect devil. I never tether him under the canvas without having a pitchfork or some other equally effective weapon where I can put my hand on it, for I don't know one minute what he will undertake to do the next. Why, in the street parades which we make every day, when we enter a town, that beast has to be muzzled with steel muzzles."

A STAG PARTY.

THE thoroughbred wild Texan is a natural equestrian. As soon as he is able to toddle he will bestride anything, from a rail fence to an alligator, with ease and grace. Mustangs become as tame as kittens after half an hour's experience under his spur, and the most stubborn Mexican mule generally gives in after a short trial.

One of these Texans recently accomplished the almost incredible feat of riding a wild stag bare-backed for several miles.

How he ever managed to mount the beast the young man could never satisfactorily explain; but certain it is that he was seen tearing across the prairie near Fredericksburg, his antlered steed frightened into a pace that would have distanced any racer at any race-course in the country.

The bold rider was finally thrown against a rail fence, and paid for his frolic with a sprained ankle and bruised head, while the stag departed for his native woodland, never, we suppose, to wander again so near the haunts of a Texan rough-rider.

A STAG PARTY.—SHOWING THE MISADVENTURE OF A BOLD RIDER.

THE ROMANCE OF ARITHMETIC.

THE most romantic of all numbers (says a writer in *Chambers's Journal*), is the figure

ROY THE RANGER.—"AS QUICK AS THOUGHT ROY DREW HIS SECOND PISTOL AND DISCHARGED IT POINT BLANK AT THE SECOND NEAREST RUFFIAN. THE BULLET WENT THROUGH HIS RIGHT ARM, AND THE UPLIFTED KNIFE DROPPED TO THE FLOOR."

nine, because it can't be multiplied away, or got rid of anyhow. What ever you do, it is as sure to turn up again as was the baby of Eugene Aram's victim. One remarkable property of this figure (said to have been first discovered by W. Green, who died in 1794) is, that all through the multiplication table the product of nine comes to nine. Multiply by what you like and it gives the same result. Begin with twice nine, 18; add the digits together, and 1 and 8 make 9. Three times 9 are 27; and 2 and 7 make 9. So it goes on up to eleven times nine, which gives 99. Very good; add the digits; 9 and 9 are 18, and 1 and 8 are 9. Going on to any extent, it is impossible to get rid of the figure 9. Take a couple of instances at random. Three hundred and thirty nine times nine are 3,051; add up the figures and they give 9. Five thousand and seventy-one times nine are 45,639; the sum of these digits is 27; and 2 and 7 are nine. M. de Maivan found out another queer thing about this number, namely, that if you take any row of figures, and reversing their order, make a subtraction sum of it, the remainder is sure to make 9. For example:

Take 5,071
Reverse figures 1,705

3,366—18, and 1 and 8 are 9.

ROY, THE RANGER.

A Tale of the Mexican War.

CHAPTER XXI.

[Continued from page 276.]

THE first houses he approached were merely small reed and thatched huts; but as he advanced, the houses increased in size, and the city assumed a more imposing appearance.

It covered some two miles square in extent, though not built as compactly as the cities in the United States.

Every house, except those around the public square, had a large garden attached to it.

The houses in the business part of the town were built after the American fashion, though seldom exceeding two stories in height.

All the windows of these buildings were grated from top to bottom with iron bars, and half of the door only opened for admittance, which gave them more the appearance of prisons than business houses.

The public square was in the centre of the town, and must have been laid out by an American or European, Roy thought, for he deemed the Mexicans never could have planned it with such beauty and precision.

On the four sides of the square the houses were built close together, as in a block, and were all of the same size and height, with the exception of the Cathedral, which, though unfinished, towered above the other buildings.

Roy made these observations under difficulties. He had penetrated to the great square amidst a confusion that exceeded anything he had ever before witnessed in his life.

The city was in an uproar from end to end.

Mules were plodding through the streets continually, laden with wounded, whose piercing shrieks, as their wounds bled afresh at every step, rose above the din and hurry of trampling troops, who had been ordered by General Arista to concentrate in the square.

He was doing all a general could do to reorganize his twice-defeated army. It was a vain effort. All discipline and order was at an end, and thousands of infuriated soldiers poured along the streets with no other thought or purpose than that of rapine and plunder.

The Mexican women fled to the ballrooms, where preparations for victory had been made, and tore the wreaths and ornaments from the walls.

Scarcely had they done so when scores of lawless rancheros burst upon them in all the fury of uncontrollable and unlicensed passion.

Crime and debauchery reveled that night in Matamoras.

Many of the inhabitants expected an assault by General Taylor's victorious army, and therefore collected a few of their most valuable effects and fled into the country.

But the spirit of war and rapine was there also, and the unfortunate exiles were robbed and murdered in the plains, or passes of the mountains.

Matamoras suffered more that night, the historian tells us, from her own countrymen than from the sword of the enemy.

Much of what had taken place, and of what was still transpiring, Roy gathered from the conversation of the different groups with whom he mingled.

He soon had a proof of the lawlessness that prevailed in the city.

A stalwart ranchero jostled against him, and was attracted by the bright hues of his *serape*. He was a sinister-faced ruffian, and was flushed with strong drink.

"That's a nice serape you have there," he cried out, in Spanish. "Take it off—it just suits me."

"Take yourself off," answered Roy, coolly.

The ranchero gave vent to a fierce oath, and drew a murderous-looking knife from his sash.

"Take it off!" he repeated, in a peremptory manner. "I will have it."

Roy drew one of his pistols and presented it, the lock giving an ominous click as he cocked it.

"You shall have the contents of this first," he said. "Be off, or I'll blow the top of your head off!"

The sight of the pistol, and Roy's determined manner, satisfied the ranchero that he had made a mistake. He retreated precipitately.

"I must not linger here," Roy muttered to himself. "I shall become involved in some brawl among these drunken robbers. I have seen enough to satisfy me that this city cannot make any defense against our troops, so I will return to the fort."

With this intention he turned from the square, and bent his steps in the direction of the place where he had left the boat.

The street down which he turned was not the same by which he had entered the city, as he had made a circuit when he left the boat, in order to make it appear that he had come from the country in the direction of Monterey.

This street led along the river's bank, and was a shorter way for him.

He soon left the noise and bustle of the square behind him, and the street became lonely and deserted.

He observed that it was a handsome street, and lined with good houses with gardens attached to them; but the houses, with their iron-barred windows, had that prison-like appearance which is peculiar to Mexican dwellings of the better class.

Not a light gleamed from any of these houses. Their inhabitants had either fled to the country or locked themselves in their dwellings, to escape the ruthless plunderers that now thronged the city.

Roy proceeded about half a mile down this lonely thoroughfare, when he came suddenly upon a house from whence a glare of light proceeded.

"Hollos! there's somebody up there!" he cried. "I wonder if I couldn't get a glass of Mexican wine there, or have a chat with one of these dark-eyed señoritas that Tone is so fond of?"

He passed by the house, and as he did so a piercing scream broke from within—a scream given by a woman in sore affright.

"The deuce!" exclaimed Roy. "What does that mean?"

The scream was repeated, and more shrilly than before.

Roy hesitated no longer. There was a woman calling for help, and that was enough for him. He drew one of his pistols, darted through the garden, and finding the door of the house ajar, pushed it open and entered.

The sight that presented itself to him as he dashed into the house was one well calculated to fire his blood, and arouse all the chivalry in his nature.

The apartment had been arranged as for a feast. A table was spread, on which two candelabra were placed, holding each six wax candles, all of different colors, white, red, purple, blue, yellow and pink. These candles all being lighted, diffused a brilliant light over the table and through the apartment.

The table was spread with all the delicacies of a Mexican repast, and there were half a dozen flasks of wine of a peculiar and fantastic shape, and long, slender wine-glasses of Venetian manufacture.

But the guests who had assembled at this feast were strangely out of keeping with its sumptuousness. They were four ruffianly-looking men, with swart faces and long, straight black hair, half-Mexican, half-Indian, but whole savages, rancheros of the worst stamp.

As Roy burst upon the scene one of these ruffians was clasping a Mexican girl in his arms, and striving to kiss her, whilst his three comrades encouraged him by boisterous laughter.

In a corner cowered a gray-haired Mexican lady, rendered speechless by affright and horror.

The Mexican girl was strangely beautiful. Her complexion was a clear olive, her eyes large, black as jet, and as soft and gentle in their glances as those of a gazelle. Her luxuriant hair was purple-black, and had a satiny sheen to it; and the pointed chin, small mouth, straight nose, and high but narrow forehead, seemed to indicate a mixture of Spanish and Moorish blood in her veins.

Roy took in the beauty of that young face in a single glance, as she cried out to him, appealingly:

"Save me, señor! oh, save me, for the love of Heaven!"

CHAPTER XXII.

FELICIANA SANTMANET.

SUCH an appeal was not likely to be disregarded by Roy Bellingham.

"Release her!" he shouted sternly to the ruffian.

The bandit ranchero obeyed this command in his

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—INTERIOR OF THE RESIDENCE OF A NATIVE OF BAGDAD.—SEE PAGE 286.

surprise, and started toward his comrades. Roy sprang quickly forward and placed himself by the girl's side. She sank upon her knees in thankfulness at this unlooked-for assistance, and clung to his *serape*. In this position Roy pointed his pistol at the bandits and cried to them:

"Villains! instantly be gone, or I will send a bullet amongst you!"

When the bandits discovered that Roy was their only opponent their courage returned, and they determined to make him pay dearly for his interference.

"Ho, ho! my young cock-sparrow!" cried the one who had seized upon the young girl. "You crow loudly, but I'll cut your comb for you. Stand by me, comrades!"

"We will!" was the unanimous reply.

"Death to the interloper!"

"Kill him, Rafael!" shouted the other three.

"Sainted Virgin! we are doomed!" moaned the maiden.

"Courage, señorita!" cried Roy, reassuringly.

The four ruffians advanced upon him knife in hand. The girl uttered a piercing cry, and the elderly lady swooned away, falling with her face to the floor.

The rancheros uttered shrill yells as they darted forward. Roy fired at Rafael and put a bullet through the centre of his forehead, and he lurched forward and fell dead within a foot of Roy.

As quick as thought Roy drew his second pistol and discharged it point blank at the second nearest ruffian. The bullet went through his right arm, and the uplifted knife dropped to the floor.

Roy cast down his pistol and drew his sabre, he made a pass at the next ruffian, slashing his left cheek, and extracting a howl of pain from his lips.

This was more than the rancheros had expected, and they turned and fled in dismay to escape from Roy's flashing sword, but they did not escape scatheless, for he got two more cuts at them as they fled, and ran one of them through the body in the garden, to which he pursued them, and he fell dead beneath a flowering cactus-plant. The two survivors fled swiftly down the street, disappearing with a marvelous celerity.

Roy returned to the house. He found the girl bending over her female companion, and endeavoring to restore her to consciousness.

She looked up as he entered, and her dark eyes brightened with a glowing look.

"You have put the villians to flight!" she cried, in Spanish.

"Yes; and it was by no means a difficult task," he answered, in his careless way, in the same language.

The dark eyes gleamed admiringly upon him.

"Oh, how brave you are!"

Then her eyes fell upon the form of the ranchero, who had been called Rafael by his comrades, on the floor, and a shiver convulsed her frame.

"Is he dead?" she inquired.

Roy spurned the form with his foot.

"As dead as Chelsea, as they say where I came from," he replied. "He's got the bullet through his brain. He was pretty desperate, I fired, and I made a good shot. Let me remove the carrion from your sight, for I can see that it affects you unpleasantly."

Roy took the body by the arms and dragged it from the apartment, depositing it beside the other one in the garden.

This done he returned to the house.

To his surprise he discovered that the girl was gone, but the older lady still lay senseless upon the floor. He took a decanter and some water from the table, knelt down beside her, and began to bathe her face with the water, in the hope that he might thus restore her to consciousness.

Whilst he was thus engaged the girl returned, holding a hand-some cut glass smelling bottle in her hand. She smiled gratefully upon Roy as she perceived his occupation.

"You are as good as you are brave!" she told him. "I went to my chamber for my salts, thinking they might revive her. Let me try."

Roy raised the lady's head from the floor, and the girl applied the pungent salts to her nostrils. As Roy held her face toward the light he perceived that there was a strong family resemblance between the lady and the girl.

"She is a relative of yours?" he said, inquiringly.

"Yes, my aunt; Donna Eusebia Santmanet."

"Is that her name? And what is yours?"

"Felicians Santmanet. She is my father's sister."

"Is your father alive?"

The girl's face clouded, and her eyes grew misty.

"Alas, no! He is dead!" she answered. "Ampodia caused him to be beheaded."

Roy was surprised at this. He was well-read in Mexican history, and the name of Santmanet, when he reflected upon it, had a familiar sound to him.

"I see," he said. "Your father was a Mexican general; he made one of these *pronunciamientos*, as they are called, and was defeated?"

"Yes," answered the girl; and she looked keenly in Roy's face. "You are not a Mexican?" she added, quickly.

Roy smiled.

"What makes you think so?" he asked.

"You do not speak our language well enough for a native."

"Indeed? I was beginning to fancy that I did."

"You are a North American?"

"Yes."

"What are you doing here?"

"I came across the river to look for a friend."

"Did you find him?"

"I did not," answered Roy.

He did not consider it necessary to inform her that she had mistaken the gender of his friend.

"You belong to General Taylor's army—you are a soldier—an officer you must be, from your skill and bravery!" cried Felicians, in that quick manner that seemed to be a characteristic with her.

"Hush! you must not betray me!" he exclaimed, warningly.

"Betray you!" she rejoined, and there was a reproachful glance in those lustrous black eyes. "Do you think I would?"

"Not purposely," he replied, appreciating the look which was more eloquent than her words; "but we cannot be too careful in an enemy's country."

She took his right hand and laid it upon her head, which she bowed before him submissively.

"I am your slave for life!" she said, impressively. "You have saved me from insult and outrage—I can never repay you, but I thank you from a full heart! Besides, your enemies are mine. Do you think I have any love for the men who killed my father?"

"Perhaps not. I know you will be friendly to me at all events. Pardon me if I appear to doubt you."

He gave her his hand and she pressed it warmly in both her own.

"May all the blessed angels guard you, señor!" she exclaimed, with great fervency.

"What a dear, delightful, grateful, little creature she is!" thought Roy, as he gazed admiringly into her beaming face.

Felicians cast down her eyes and blushed. She thought Roy the handsomest young man that she had ever beheld. There was an awkward pause between them, which was broken by a sigh from Donna Eusebia's lips.

"She revives!" exclaimed Roy.

He raised the aunt from the floor, and placed her in a chair. Then he filled a glass from one of the flasks on the table and held it to her lips.

Donna Eusebia drank its contents and then opened her eyes, glancing around her in a bewildered manner. Roy replaced the glass upon the table.

Donna Eusebia's blanched visage grew more composed when she perceived that only Roy and her niece were present.

"Are they gone—the ruffians?" she asked, in faltering accents.

"Yes, aunt," answered Felicians. "This brave young officer put them to flight."

Roy turned and made his obeisance to the dame.

"Blessed Mother! it's more than I expected. I thought we should both be murdered. Oh! brave young man! Is he an officer in General Arista's army, Felicians?"

"No, aunt; he is a brave North American. He is——"

Roy held up his fingers warningly.

"Fear nothing!" answered Felicians. "Here are only two grateful women who will ever afterward be your devoted friends."

"We are rich," said Donna Eusebia, "and if the señor should——"

Felicians checked her, for she saw Roy toss back his hair from his forehead with the old movement.

"Gold can never repay him for what he has done for us," she said. "The señor is as rich as we are, perhaps?"

"Rich enough!" rejoined Roy, tersely.

"But let him tell us his name, that we may utter it in our prayers," she continued, with a winning look of entreaty.

"My name is Leroy Bellingham, señoras," replied Roy, politely.

"And your rank?"

"Lieutenant."

Felicians looked surprised.

"Is that all?" she cried. "I thought you were a colonel at least."

Roy caressed his mustache and smiled.

"All in good time, señorita," he answered. "I am young, yet."

"Her father was a general!" exclaimed Donna Eusebia, proudly. "You have no doubt heard of him, General Santmanet?"

Roy bowed his head affirmatively.

"Ah, yes, of course, you have—who has not?" continued Donna Eusebia, warming with the theme, for it was a favorite with her. "Ah! Fortune does not always give us our deserts. He would now have been President of Mexico but for an unlucky chance. He commenced a revolution in Tabasco, against Santa Anna, but was defeated through the cowardice of his soldiers, and was obliged to fly to Havana. There he collected another army and returned to Mexico. But cruel Fate still pursued him. He was shipwrecked on the bar of the Rio Tabasco, and he and his friends were captured by General Ampodia, who caused his head to be cut off, boiled in oil, and stuck upon a pole to blacken in the sun."

[To be continued.]

"Roy the Ranger" was commenced in No. 451.

EASY LESSONS IN PHONOGRAPHY, OR SHORT-HAND.

OMISSION OF VOWELS.

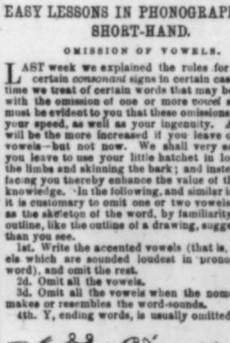
LAST week we explained the rules for omitting certain *consonant* signs in certain cases. This time we treat of certain words that may be written with the omission of one or more vowel signs. It must be evident to you that these omissions increase your speed, as well as your ingenuity. And they will be the more increased if you leave off *all* the vowels—but not now. We shall very soon give you leave to use your little hatchet in lopping off the limbs and skinning the bark; and instead of defacing you thereby enhance the value of the tree of knowledge. In the following, and similar instances, it is customary to omit one or two vowels, so long as the skeleton of the word, by familiarity with its outline, like the outline of a drawing, suggests more than you see.

1st. Write the accented vowels (that is, the vowels which are sounded loudest in pronouncing a word), and omit the rest.

2d. Omit all the vowels.

3d. Omit all the vowels when the nomenclature makes or resembles the word-sounds.

4th. Y, ending words, is usually omitted.



Capital, reasons, artless, promises, undoubted, indebted.
Solitary, traceable, America, money, unto, prominence.
Along, among, necessary, always, into, exercise.
Better, considerable, correspond, memory, judgment, philosopher.
Ready, lady, essence, labor, argue, later.
Conquer, intention, pity, dread, enter, red-emption.
Tarry, folly, valley, many, fancy, jury.
Cherry, racy, rosy, body, needy, handy.

The first two lines of the engraving illustrate principle No. 1, as above; the next two, principle No. 2; the next two, principle 3; and the last two, No. 4. These words are selected from Graham's lists. You can add many others from your own memory, or from the paper. Those words without any vowels are very little, if any, shorter in actual reporting. Now practice until you memorize them.

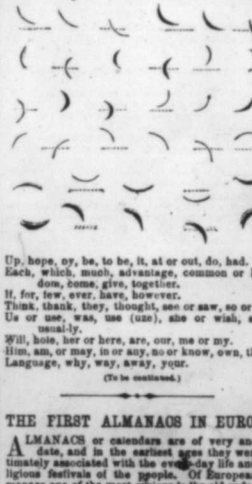
REPORTING WORD-SIGNS.

Now, dear children, and "children of a larger growth," we have come to the beginning of a flowery path, the signs for the simplest and most frequently occurring words in ordinary, every-day talking and writing. We will not burden you with too many at one time, nor with the more complicated.

This time you have the simple, full-length signs, without any hooks, half-lengths, or circles. You will see at once how much longer and laboriously you have been writing, when you compare these short-signs with the full forms, vowels included. These signs have been adopted and used in all systems, more or less, for a great many years, and it is impossible to invent anything briefer, and consistently with the principles of the art.

While we are proceeding with these sound-signs we will not *now* tell you why some of them are written *above* the line, some *on* the line, and others *through* or *under* the line. Perhaps you can guess. When you write them in connection with your other and longer word-forms, write them according to their position as just stated and illustrated. Each sign constitutes a part, if not all, of the consonants of the word. Try and commit them all to memory by constant practice on them during this week, and longer, if necessary.

Take FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY, translate a column into Short-hand, with the proper vowels and consonants, but use these word-signs as in the cut, when you come to them. These words and signs are used in actual reporting. Practice makes them quick as speech.



Up, hope, or, be, to be, it, at or out, do, had.
Each, which, much, advantage, common or kingdom, come, give, together.
If, for, few, ever, have, however.
Think, thank, they, thought, see or saw, so or say.
Us or use, was, use (*use*), she or wish, shall, usually.
Will, hole, her or here, are, our, me or my.
Him, am, or may, in or any, no or know, own, thing.
Language, why, way, away, your.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST ALMANACS IN EUROPE.

ALMANACS or calendars are of very ancient date, and in the earliest ages they were intimately associated with the every-day life and religious festivals of the people. Of European almanacs one of the most curious is the old rude clog almanac, said to have been introduced by the Danish invaders. About the middle of the twelfth century were published the almanacs of Solomon Jarchus, and in the Savilian Library at Oxford there is an MS. copy of the almanac of Petrus de Dacia, published about the year 1300, the writer being supposed to have been the famous "man of the signs" so common in later almanacs. From Oxford emanated the Standard Almanacs, such as that of John Somers, written in 1380, and that of Nicholas de Lynna, published in 1386. The first almanac printed in Europe is supposed to have been the *Kalendarium Novum* of Regiomontanus, calculated for the three years, 1475, 1494 and 1513, issued at Buda, and sold for ten crowns of gold. The earliest known to have been printed in England was the *Shepherd's Kalendar*, translated from the French, and printed by Richard Pynson in 1497.

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

INTERIOR OF THE RESIDENCE OF A NATIVE OF BAGDAD.

BAGDAD is still a city of about 65,000 inhabitants, chiefly Moslems, the Christians and Jews together numbering nearly 12,000. It is built entirely of sun-dried brick (stone not being obtainable anywhere here in Mesopotamia), partly on the right, partly on the left, bank of the River Tigris, about forty miles due north of the ruins of Babylon.

The buildings on the left bank of the river are far more numerous and of somewhat better appearance than those on the right bank, and form decidedly the principal part of the city. A rickety bridge of boats establishes communication between the two river-banks.

The entire city has a circumference of five miles, and is encircled by a stout brick wall, about sixty feet high, pierced by seven gates, located at about equal distances from each other. The streets are unpaved, fearfully dusty and filthy, sinuous and very narrow, some of them so much so that a tall person can easily touch the houses on both sides of the street with outstretched arms.

The principal buildings are two and even three stories, the majority of the dwelling-houses, however, only one story high. The city contains over one hundred mosques, and at least an equal number of minars or minarets, some of them of imposing appearance, beautiful design of architecture, and magnificently decorated with arabesques.

The bazaars of Bagdad are famous throughout the Orient for their richness and vast extent, and considered the best-stocked bazaars of Western Asia.

The country all around the city, as far as the eye can reach, is excessively flat and arid, utterly destitute of vegetation and human dwellings—in fact, the yellowish-gray dismal desert, only traversed by camel-caravans. Within the walls of Bagdad, however, especially along the river-banks, where constant irrigation is easily kept up, the soil is productive enough, and both river-banks abound in shady groves and luxuriant gardens, full of stately date-trees, banana, fig, pomegranate, orange and lemon trees, jasmin and rose-bushes, and an endless variety of other subtropical trees, bushes, flowers and vegetables.

The climate is terribly hot and dry. This very scarce in that region; nevertheless, Bagdad cannot be called an unhealthy place, the air being generally excessively dry; moreover, there are no swamps nor injurious exhalations of the ground in its vicinity, and, were it not for the culpable slovenliness and laziness of the population, who bury their dead in very shallow graves within the city walls, and care absolutely nothing about the horrid filthiness of the streets, where dead animals are allowed to lie and rot at leisure, smallpox, Asiatic cholera and other epidemics, which from time to time ravage the city, might easily be avoided.

All Orientals are early risers, particularly so the inhabitants not only of Bagdad, but of that entire region south of the thirty-fifth degree of latitude. This laudable habit, however, appears to be less due to a predilection on their part for early rising than to downright compulsion.

In Lower Mesopotamia, Arabia, Southern Syria and Southern Persia the sun bears all day long with such relentless power upon everything exposed to his withering rays, that toward evening the mud-colored walls of the buildings fairly glow with heat, and dare scarcely be touched with the bare skin. No sooner has the sun set, however, than the heat infused during the course of the day into the brick-work begins to emanate again therefrom, thus rendering the atmosphere in those narrow streets and between walls downright insupportable, and compelling the population to seek refuge from the sweltering oven below upon the flat roofs of their dwellings, where, exposed to the delicious, gentle breezes which waft throughout the evening and night down the majestic river, they alone can find fresh air and recreation, and where, when tired and sleepy, they lie down under the starry heavens upon a quilt or two, spread either upon the roof-floor or upon one of the common Oriental bedsteads, which are entirely composed of split bamboo, and resemble in construction and general appearance very much a hen-coop—such as poultry-dealers in this country are using—and there, in full view of the silvery moon and myriads of twinkling stars, master, mistress and children, men and women, sleep, fanned by the most delicious of gentle night-breezes imaginable—heavenly zephyrs, in truth, such as cannot be experienced in any other part of the world—a most refreshing sleep.

But no sooner does the first ray of the rising sun again pierce the eastern horizon than everybody rises promptly from his couch, the bedding of which is rolled up and stowed away down-stairs till evening by the women, servants or slaves of the house, who then, without delay, prepare breakfast, while the head and other adult male members of the family, if they be Moslems, tarry on the roof, awaiting the call of the muezzin from the pinnacle of the nearest minaret, on hearing which they spread their prayer-carpets some distance apart from each other, and, after having taken off their shoes and performed the requisite abiutions, each steps upon his carpet, faces in the direction of Mecca, makes his salaam to Allah (God), and then murmurs the customary morning-prayer.

As soon as the sun has sufficiently risen to bear upon the roof the latter is deserted, and every inmate of the house repairs to the rooms below, or to the courtyard, where the domestic animals of the house are kept. Only the most wealthy of the inhabitants have got separate buildings or court-yards for their domestic animals. Camels are invariably kept in yards or stables expressly built for the purpose, owing to the strong smell emanating from the "Ship of the Desert."

After breakfast, which is usually of the most frugal kind, consisting, perhaps, of a few tiny cups of strong, black coffee (always taken without sugar or milk), a piece of very coarse, pancake-shaped, unleavened wheaten bread, a few dates, or a small quantity of tobacco, a short "chibouque" is taken, during which "shatrabe" or "nargilleh," whatever smoking implement may be called for, are stuffed with tobacco, and lit by a servant or slave, who invariably takes first a few whiffs therefrom himself or herself, in order to be sure that the pipe is in good running order before it is handed over to the person for whom it is intended.

The master of the house, while smoking, gives his servants the orders of the day, and then, if he happens to be a merchant or tradesman, leisurely repairs on foot, if the distance is not too long, to his office, store, or workshop in the bazaar, or, if he be a government employé, to the seraglio (Pasha's residence), or to the custom-house, or to his post at one of the gates of the city, where he attends to business in the characteristically cool and leisurely manner of the Orientals, repairing occasionally, either alone or in company with business acquaintances, to the nearest coffee-shop for a sip of coffee and a whiff of smoke, talking business all the while.

In the meantime his wife (or wives, if he be a Moslem), with their servants and slaves, if they have any, attend to household affairs at home, sweep the yard, carry water from the river (the only place where it is obtainable), grind corn, bake bread, feed the domestic animals, wash and mend clothing, dress and mind the children, go to market for provisions, prepare the evening meal, etc., and patiently await the return of the master of the house, who usually makes his appearance when he is hungry—i. e., about sunset, when the bazaar closes and the business of the day is over. If he be a good Moslem he repairs twice a day, during business hours, to the nearest mosque, where he is handed a "seggadeh" (prayer-carpet, and a brass bowl of water, by one of the employés of the mosque, and after having taken off his shoes and performed his ablutions, steps barefoot, or in his stocking-feet, upon his carpet, previously spread out in a quiet corner of the mosque, and thereon says his prayers at Dur (noon) and Asser (about four o'clock P. M.), the exact time for each prayer being regularly announced to every Moslem by the loudly ringing call of the muezzins from the lofty balustrade of the minarets, who call the five daily prayers ordained by Mohammed.

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W. O. STODDARD writes for it.

LIEUT. JAYNE writes for it.

TOM LEROY'S TRIP ASHORE.

[Continued from page 283.]

"Is it possible? Are you, then, the son of my old friend Leroy?"

"I am the son of Captain Leroy who was drowned in 1860," answered the young sailor.

The mystery was soon explained. Mr. Baldwin, on hearing of the death of his old friend, Captain Leroy, and knowing that he had an only son, had made vigorous inquiries to find out his whereabout. For a long time these inquiries had been useless, when he suddenly discovered that a young man of the name of Leroy was serving on board the *Bristol*.

Fearing that he might find him deceived by an adventurer, the old gentleman had written a note to the person named Leroy, asking him in case he was the son of Captain Leroy, to visit Niagara Falls. By some mistake he had forgotten to mention the name of Baldwin, so our two young people had been on the point of losing their lives through his carelessness.

* * * * * * *

A few years after this event was a splendid wedding at Niagara.

Miss Nellie Baldwin was married to Tom Leroy, chief officer of the *Bristol*, who had retired from the sea and had resolved to stay on shore for the rest of his life, Mr. Baldwin having settled such a handsome sum of money upon his daughter that Tom had no necessity to "plow the briny deep" any longer.

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor - $5.00
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N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 654.

1. Bow-string. 2. Tea-pot—TnP, EcbO, AnT. 3. Fire. 4. Mo(u)th, Gr(a)ls, Ca(u)se, Co(p)ts, Din-(n)ers, Pri(n)ces. 5. A, And, Angle, Anglers, Clear, Err, S. 6. Angle, Nora-A, Grant, Lance, Eater. 7. (W)agne, (P)rice, (T)rain, (H)eight, (S)light. 8. Postal, Ophite, Shafts, Tiffs, Attire, Lesser. 9. Lime, Limb, Lime, Limn, Limp. 10. Canton, Canto, Can't, Can.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 654.

1.—M. Richardson, No. 523 N. Sixth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

2.—A. W. Seguin, P. O. Box 2240, New Orleans, La.

3.—C. M. Greene, 1121 S Street, Washington, D. C.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—HEADS AND TAILS.

I AM a disaster which I hope you'll ne'er meet;
Curtailed, ladies use me on dresses called sweet;
Behead and curtail and I am aye and a day;
Curtail me again and a girl's name display;
Now of head and tail 'twill you would think me but little,
Yet on a bank bill I just suit to a tittle.

2.—SQUARE WORDS.

A noise; one who loads; to worship; a Roman emperor; grand.

3.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A vowel: from; anxieties; a metal; a constellation; an important member of the solar system; a thousand.

4.—CHARADE.

A platter, a unit and a pen
Make rogues out of honest men.

5.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

My first's ne'er seen but on its tail;
My second's felt, not seen at all;
All colors in my span I hold;
This lives in a smack of chemistry;
Meddle not with this when it is cold;
A token of assent am I.

6.—SQUARE WORDS.

First is a pretty name, I'm sure;
You've often heard of it before;
With my next don't make a blunder;
It always means reverse of under;
In your stockings, coat, or dress
I'm found, in numbers more or less;
Without my last you could not write,
Could not work, and could not fight.

7.—DECAPITATION.

In almost every shape I'm made,
My beauty ne'er is known to fade
If kept both clean and bright;
Behead, you see me every day;
Once more behead, there comes to sight
One who can work and pray.

8.—CHARADE.

Invoke your pity for the man
Who may perchance my first have lost;
The chances are he'll wreck himself
When on life's stormy billows tossed.
And though his first my second be,
It will not aid him in a row;
For cracked on the head my entirety be
If he my whole is, you'll allow.

9.—ENIGMA.

I am a part of a tree, though not much like wood.
I am useful at sea, though not used for food.
I am burnt and cut up, still suffer no ill.
I am used as a stopper for many a gill.
In bottles and casks I'm frequently found,
I am porous, still not a conductor of sound.
To carpets they use me, and food once I make;
For boots and hats also my worth is at stake.
Light, strong, and brittle, thin, thick, and tough,
I am useful to all, the gentle and rough.
I am screwed, wired, and drawn, much to my shame;
I leave you, kind reader, to guess at my name.

10.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

When knights went forth to join the fray,
Armed cap-a-pie with us were they.

1. The world in me is clearly shown;
2. A damp and chilly day by this is known;
3. A fruit, East Indian, you here may see;
4. To come about is shown by me;
5. Respected, loved and feared, this now will be.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.—A young man in Kingston (N. Y.), being out of employment, recently requested of a former employer a letter of recommendation to aid him in securing a situation. The letter was written and handed to the applicant, who was totally unable to read it, as was every person to whom it was shown. A friend advised him to take it to a printing-office, where it could be deciphered, as compositors are noted for being able to make out the worst specimens of writing. It was given to compositors in various printing establishments, and in turn given up without being deciphered. At last, as a forlorn hope, it was given to the proscription clerk in a drug-store, who had the reputation of being able to read anything. The man of drugs took the paper, gazed at it long and thoughtfully, and finally seized an empty quart bottle, and hurried round the store, taking some fluids of various colors from sundry bottles, and finally shaking the compound most vigorously. Then, handing it to the owner of the letter of recommendation, he remarked to that much-astonished individual, "Two dollars—and a very good cough mixture it is."

MOTHER WIT.

A pretty long list might be made of men who have owed their advancement in life to a smart answer given at the right moment. One of Napoleon's veterans, who survived his master many years, was wont to recount with great glee how he had once picked up the Emperor's cocked-hat at a review, when the latter, not noticing that he was a private, said, carelessly:

"Thank you, captain."

"In what regiment, sire?" instantly asked the ready-witted soldier.

Napoleon, perceiving his mistake, answered with a smile:

"In my Guard, for I see you know how to be prompt."

"The newly-made officer received his commission next morning. A somewhat similar anecdote is related of Marshal Suvoroff, who, when receiving a dinner-ticket from the son of a Russian sergeant who had greatly distinguished himself on the Danube, attempted to confuse the messenger by a series of whimsical questions, but found him fully equal to the occasion.

"How many fish are there in the sea?" asked Suvoroff.

"All that are not caught yet," was the answer.

"How far is it to the moon?"

"Two of your excellency's forced marches."

"What would you do if you saw your men giving way in battle?"

"I'd tell them that there was a wagon-load of whisky just behind the enemy's line."

Baffled at all points, the marshal ended with:

"What's the difference between your colonel and myself?"

"My colonel cannot make me a lieutenant, but your excellency has only to say the word."

"I say it now, then," answered Suvoroff, "and a right good officer you'll be."

A FAIR INFERENCE.—The reason that ladies dye their hair of a light color must be that by so doing they get rid of dark care.

GENERAL CHOUZAT, a prominent French officer who died a few days ago, served in China, and was present at the looting of the Summer Palace. There was a tree of gold in one of the drawing-rooms, which, naturally, the soldiers were not long in stripping of its leaves, but the general's share of the pillage, which he kept till his death, was—a bunch of violets which one of the ladies of the imperial household had dropped on the table of her bedroom ere taking to flight.

SIR WALTER SCOTT does not seem to have been the dunce at school which some have stated. Once a boy in the same class was asked by the "dominie" what part of speech "with" was. "A noun, sir," said the boy. "You young blockhead," cried the indignant pedagogue, "what example can you give of such a thing?" "I can tell you, sir," interrupted Scott; "you know there is a verse in the Bible which says, 'they bound Samson with withes.'"

"SAMBO, kin yo' tell why dey inwaribly takes de pennies from de chil'ren at de Sunday-school?" "Cose I kin. Dat is to get de cents ob de meetin'."

MIND YOUR STOPS.—A London merchant retained a celebrated physician of Edinburgh to attend his wife during her confinement. A few days before the time fixed for his departure, the physician received the following telegraphic message: "Do not come too late." He immediately sets off. Arrived in London, he hears with astonishment that the new British citizen has made his appearance in the world several days before. The husband had wished to telegraph, "Do not come. Too late;" but the clerk, perhaps, not knowing a comma or a full stop from a haystack, had left out all stops. Thus the economy of two words, "it is," cost the merchant the travelling expenses of the physician, besides a pretty large fee.

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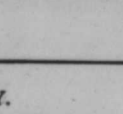

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TOM LEROY'S TRIP ASHORE.

THE Ocean Line Steamer *Bristol* had just arrived at her pier in the North River. The grand ship was the scene of much noise and confusion. Sailors, stewards, officers, boys, etc., ran here and there, apparently in a furious manner, but in reality attending to their duty in a smart, seaman-like manner.

Conspicuous for his zeal and activity was a dashing young fellow of some twenty Summers.

His dark eyes, light, curly hair, and light, though muscular frame, were conspicuous among the crowds of rough sailors who surrounded him.

The vessel was now moored to the pier, and the most excited of the passengers rushed tumultuously ashore, rejoicing in their escape from a long confinement on board ship.

Then the work of unloading the ship began. A hundred stevedores boarded her, and in less time than it takes to write it, the hatches were broken off and part of the ship's cargo was on its way to the shore.

The sailors having brought the vessel safely to land, and having secured her to her berth, were now relieved from their posts, and prepared to ask leave to go ashore.

Among the foremost to interview the captain was the young sailor we have previously mentioned.

The captain seemed rather surprised at his request.

"Why, Tom, how is it that you are in such a hurry to get ashore? It is the first time that I have known you to make such a request since you have sailed in my ship—and that's getting on for five years."

"The reason that I wish to go ashore is that I received a mysterious letter while in Liverpool, and I should like to find out what it means. You know that I am a friendless orphan, and that with the exception of yourself I have not a friend in the world; well, while in Liverpool I received this letter. You will oblige me by reading it, so that you can form an idea of the matter, and perhaps advise me as to what is best to be done."

He then handed the captain the following letter:

"NEW YORK, August 19th, 1865.

"If you are the Tom Leroy whose father and mother were drowned at sea, in 1860, you may hear of something to your advantage by visiting Niagara Falls. A FRIEND."

When Captain Markham had read this note to the end he said to young Leroy:

"Now, look here, Tom, I do not mean to give you any advice either way. It may be only a hoax of some of your shipmates, or it may be of some real use to you. But in either case a trip to Niagara Falls will not do you any harm; so here's a hundred dollars on account, and off you go and enjoy yourself."

After thanking the kind captain, Tom sprang into his little cabin, for though so young, he was already fourth officer of the ship, and ten minutes afterward, dressed in a smart suit of sailor's clothes, he was on his way to Albany, and from thence to Niagara.

Putting up at a small hotel, he indulged in a good supper, and then retired to rest, resolving not to begin his inquiries until the next day.

On the following morning he was up at an early hour, and anxiously asked at all the hotels if any one of the name of Leroy was staying in the respective houses, or if any letters had been left for a party of the name of Leroy.

To all his questions he received the same disheartening answer, "Don't know the name."

He then questioned members of the neighboring householders, but received the same answer. At last he gave up his inquiries in despair, and resolved to make the rest of his time a pleasure-trip.

Of course all our readers are familiar with the magnificent falls of Niagara, so it is useless for us to describe them.

Tom enjoyed his visit to the utmost. Three whole days he passed in quiet wandering through the magnificent country, enjoying himself to his heart's content.

On the evening of the fourth day he was standing on the very brink of the American side of the falls. A thousand different thoughts rushed through his mind.

He thought of his lost parents, his friendless existence, and lastly, of the cruel joke that had been played upon him.

His eyes were fixed with a terrible gaze upon the foaming waters dashing at his feet.

Suddenly an irresistible impulse attracted him nearer and nearer to the brink. He seemed powerless to stop himself.

Step by step, inch by inch, he neared the fatal brink.

Another step and he would be whirled into eternity.

Bounding forward like a frightened fawn came a beautiful girl. He neither saw nor heard her. The rock crumbles under his feet.

He falls!

Suddenly two small white hands seize him by the jacket, drag him back to earth, and the rescuer falls fainting to the ground.

Tom rubbed his eyes as if awakening from some terrible dream.

The whole affair had happened so suddenly that it really seemed impossible to be true.

He was soon joined by an elderly lady and gentleman, who evidently claimed the beautiful girl who had saved his life as their daughter. With Tom's assistance she was conveyed to the carriage, and, accompanied by our hero, was driven to a pretty little house not far from the falls.

The beautiful young heroine soon revived, and inquired anxiously if she had been in time to save the young sailor.

"He is all right," replied her father, "and I will bring him to you as soon as you are quite recovered." In the meantime try and have a good sleep, while I ask that young idiot how it was that he came to endanger not only his own life but that of my beloved child."

Tom had been waiting anxiously at the door in the hope of being able to assure himself of his brave rescuer's safety before he returned to his hotel.

"Come in here, young man," cried Mr. Baldwin, for such was the name of our heroine's father. "Come into the reception-room; I want to have a talk with you."

"With pleasure, sir," replied Tom.

"How in thunder did you come to get so near the brink of the falls?" said the old gentleman, pettishly.

"I cannot say," answered the young sailor; "but I am extremely sorry that I risked your daughter's life as well as my own. I was plunged in a sea of disagreeable thoughts, and some irresistible power dragged me to the brink."

"What disagreeable thoughts should a young man of your age have to indulge in?" asked Mr. Baldwin, in surprise.

"Read that letter and you will see," said Tom, handing him the mysterious note that had brought him to Niagara.

Mr. Baldwin had no sooner cast his eyes upon the handwriting than he turned deadly pale, trembled, and exclaimed, in a low voice:

[For continuation, see page 301.]

TOM LEROY'S TRIP ASHORE.—"THE ROCK CRUMBLES UNDER HIS FEET. HE FALLS! SUDDENLY TWO SMALL, WHITE HANDS SEIZE HIM BY THE JACKET, DRAG HIM BACK TO EARTH, AND THE RESCUER FALLS FAINTING TO THE GROUND."